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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

The Marianas Economic Research and Development Foundation has launched a petition that asks: "Should casino gaming be authorized in the Third Senatorial District (Saipan)?" How would you answer this?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

ASIA



Searchers fail to find one of the doors of a missing passenger jet.

► PAGE 15

WORLD



Russian President Vladimir Putin defends the separatist drive in Crimea.

► PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE



A polygamous family says sharing their story has been liberating.

► PAGE 19

UNDER CASINO BILL TRANSMITTED TO GOVERNOR

House technical correction ensures tax rebate remains



BREADFRUIT INITIATIVE

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, second from left, huddles with Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), center, as they check on the progress of the governor's breadfruit initiative on Friday at the Kagman agricultural center. The governor personally transplanted in November a Ma'afala breadfruit that has grown 14 inches since. In photo are, from left, governor's Breadfruit Initiative Task Force chair Ivan A. Blanco of the Office of Grants Management, Inos, Deleon Guerrero, Agriculture director Manny Tenorio, and Commerce Secretary Sixto Igisomar.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Group eyes 4,000 signatures to place casino question on ballot

► MERDF wants to 'reinvigorate' CNMI economy

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Although only some 3,200 signatures are needed, a non-profit group hopes to get at least 4,000 signatures of Saipan's almost 13,000 registered voters to place the Saipan casino question in the November ballot. The group's proposed question is, "Should casino gaming be

authorized in the Third Senatorial District (Saipan)?"

The Marianas Economic Research and Development Foundation, led by president and board chair Isidoro T. Cabrera, launched the signature drive yesterday.

Cabrera said they began distributing sets of the petitions to friends and family members. Within days,

See GROUP on Page 4

Family of slain As Gonno couple offers \$5K reward

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The family of a Chinese couple who were found dead inside a burned house in As Gonno last Feb. 23 is offering a \$5,000 cash reward to anyone who can provide information leading to the arrest of the person or persons behind the killing.

A family member of victim Qing Xiu Zheng told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that they are offering the cash reward because they want to know who killed Zheng and her husband, Guo

See FAMILY on Page 4

► Mayor warns of Tinian Dynasty shutdown the 'minute Inos signs bill'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives made a technical correction to the Saipan casino bill it transmitted yesterday afternoon to Gov. Eloy S. Inos to clarify that the measure does not intend to scrap the tax rebate as community members feared, even as Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz warned that Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino "will have to shut down" the minute the governor signs the bill because of the way it is written.

See HOUSE on Page 4



Lan Zhi Guan, the 65-year-old mother of victim Qing Xiu Zheng, obliges for a photo with Zheng's children, Xing Peng Xu and Li Lian Xu, last week at their home in Kobleville. The trio along with Zheng's father, Jin Chuan Zhuang, and Jin Kai Hu, father of male victim Guo Huang Xu, arrived on Saipan from China last Wednesday. As of yesterday, family members were still waiting for investigators to allow them to see the bodies.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Agencies' budget requests at \$170M. PAGE 2

Atalig surrenders; starts serving 8-month prison term. PAGE 3



PICKS OF THE WEEK



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Local

Agencies' budget requests at \$170M; Inos' plan only \$123.4M

» **Governor prepares 2014 supplemental budget that could now reach \$10M**

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos is once again faced with the daunting task of shrinking by up to \$170 million the budget requests of government agencies to fit his \$123.4 million fiscal year 2015 spending plan, barely three weeks to go before his April 1 deadline to submit a budget package to the Legislature. The governor is also preparing his proposed fiscal year

2014 supplemental budget that could now reach \$10 million, up from previous estimates of \$8 million to \$9 million.

"The task now is either to lower or bring up the resources. But we have to be realistic," Inos said in an interview yesterday, shortly after his first Cabinet meeting since returning from Washington, D.C.

He said departments and agencies submitted budget requests totaling \$160 million to \$170 million.

"We know that the request from agencies have exceeded estimated resources but that is the task. We know that we are not going to submit a budget that exceeds resources. So that is the task of the budget process—reconcile those two [resources and requested budget]," Inos added.

Yesterday, agencies and departments started meeting with the Office of Management and Budget on their submitted spending plan, the deadline for which was on Feb. 28.

The governor made it clear that there won't be work hour cuts in fiscal year 2015, which

is from Oct. 1, 2014 to Sept. 30, 2015.

While tourism arrivals have been improving, the additional resources don't match with the growing government obligations including annual payment to a retirement settlement trust fund, increased health insurance premium, and restoration of retirees' 25 percent pension cut.

Inos said the proposed \$123.4 million budget for fiscal year 2015 still does not include revenue from a Saipan casino bill, because it's not signed yet, if at all. He added that the government has yet to realize income from video lot-

tery and electronic gaming.

Supplemental budget

But the governor expects to submit soon a proposed fiscal year 2014 supplemental budget to the Legislature, prior to his submission of a 2015 budget.

While he earlier estimated that the supplemental budget would be between \$8 million and \$9 million, the number could be closer to \$10 million now.

The supplemental budget, he said, includes proceeds from the sale of the Mariana House in Washington, D.C. to a real estate firm for over

\$900,000. The property used to be the official residence of the CNMI's resident representative to the nation's capital until 2009. The CNMI bought the property for \$250,000 to \$300,000.

The proposed supplemental budget would include \$5 million for the annual minimum guaranteed payment to the retirement settlement trust fund, the government health and life insurance plan's premium payment, and possibly "\$200,000 to \$300,000" to refund members of the Commonwealth Government Employees Credit Union.

DPL checks on HK investors for San Antonio land RFP

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Department of Public Lands Secretary Pete A. Tenorio went to Hong Kong to meet with three companies that formed joint venture Honest Profit International Ltd., check their references and finances, and visit their projects and facilities, as part of DPL's ongoing evaluation to determine whether Honest Profit or South Korean-based E Land should be allowed to lease a lot in San Antonio to build a new hotel with at least 200 rooms.

Tenorio is expected to announce DPL's decision this week.

The lot for lease is 40,827 square meters of public land in San Antonio.

This comes at a time when the CNMI lacks available hotel rooms to accommodate a growing number of visitors to the islands.

The DPL secretary reported

to Gov. Eloy S. Inos on the progress of the San Antonio land lease request for proposal during a Cabinet meeting on Capital Hill from 9am to past 12 noon yesterday.

The governor separately confirmed DPL's fact-finding visit to Hong Kong and the ongoing evaluation of the proposals submitted.

Tenorio said they had a "pretty good discussion. And it turned out that we are satisfied. They provided us the information that we needed. So now, we are in the process of reviewing our notes and recorded discussions and eventually come up with something that I would issue [later]."

Tenorio said, however, that being satisfied with the results of meetings and personal visit to the investor groups' facilities does not mean that Honest Profit will get the lease to the San Antonio lot.

E Land, through Micronesia Resort Inc., meanwhile, is

also hopeful that it will be able to lease the San Antonio lot to build a new hotel.

The South Korean investment giant is about to announce the reopening of the former The Palms Resort under either the global hotel brand Sheraton or Hilton. E Land is also eyeing a global hotel brand for Coral Ocean Point, which is undergoing renovation and expansion. It also owns Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

The other three investor groups that didn't make it to DPL's short list for the San Antonio lot were 1) KSA Corp., 2) INNOASSET, and 3) Future Ent. Inc. & Reading Investment & Securities and Korea Asset Investment Corp.

DPL had already earlier picked Tan Holdings over E Land's Micronesia Resort Inc. for a long-term lease of almost 10 hectares of public lands in Marpi. Tan Holdings proposes to build an over \$133 million, 455-room high-end hotel resort.



PAPAL AUDIENCE

Holy Father Pope Francis greets and exchanges a few words with Rev. Fr. Ryan Jimenez at Domus Sanctae Marthae in the Vatican where he was staying. Jimenez was in Rome to represent the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa in the SIGNIS World Congress. SIGNIS is an international network of Catholic Communicators, which fall under the umbrella of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Back row, from left: Charles Rutkowski, assistant director, CTAA; Vince Merfalen, mobility management & transit coordinator, COTA; Thomas J. Camacho, special assistant for public transportation, COTA; Chris Zeilinger, director, National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination, CTAA; Roy Rios, community planner, COTA and Christopher Sablan, grants management coordinator, COTA. Front row, from left: Sheryl Gross-Glaser, coordination specialist, National Resource Center for Human Transportation Coordination, CTAA and Mary Dickinson, administrative officer, COTA.

COTA staff returns from federal training

Staff of the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority recently returned from the 3rd Training Session of the Federal Transit Administration's Environmental & Sustainability Management System.

Virginia Tech, under contract with the FTA, was the primary host of the training located at the VTech facility in Roanoke, Va.

En route to Virginia, COTA staff flew to Washington, D.C. to meet with officials of the Community Transportation Association of America to discuss and finalize the technical assistance agreement with CTAA. This is a grant created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture known as the Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Assistance Program.

Administered by CTAA, the program provides technical assistance to small communities of less than 50,000 people. The focus of the program is economic development: helping small and emerging businesses and stimulating economic development through new and improved public transportation. (COTA)

Atalig surrenders to start serving 8-month prison term

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Suspended lawyer Antonio M. Atalig surrendered to the Department of Corrections on Friday to begin serving his eight-month prison term for domestic violence.

Saipan Tribune learned that the 57-year-old Atalig voluntarily reported to the Susupe prison on Friday at 6pm.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman, however, has issued an order to show cause, asking Atalig to appear and explain tomorrow, Wednesday, why he should not be held in contempt for not complying with the order requiring him to report to Corrections on Feb. 15, 2014.

Wiseman earlier issued an arrest warrant for Atalig after learning that he did not report

to Corrections on Feb. 15. Law enforcement agents failed to arrest him.

According to court records, Atalig pleaded guilty last year to assault and battery, two counts of disturbing the peace, and criminal contempt.

On Nov. 22, 2013, Wiseman sentenced him to eight months in prison. The judge then granted Atalig's request to delay reporting to Corrections because he needed to find a job and fulfill many other obligations.

Wiseman orally granted Atalig's request, ordering him to report to Corrections on or before Feb. 15, 2014. Atalig submitted a proposed order to start serving his sentence on Feb. 15, 2015. Wiseman subsequently signed the order but later corrected the year to 2014. The judge said he hopes the "very disturbing error" was not

intentional on Atalig's part.

On Feb. 25, 2014, attorney Robert H. Myers, on behalf of Atalig, asked Wiseman to extend once more the time for Atalig to serve his sentence, claiming, among other things, that the typographical error was due to a recording error from his handwritten notes to typewritten form.

On Feb. 28, 2014, Wiseman rejected Atalig's motion. The judge said that Atalig's reliance on an erroneous court order issued as a result of his own mistake is not well taken by the court.

"The court expects a certain level of decorum from former practicing attorneys appearing *pro se* [one's own behalf], and defendant has failed to meet that standard," Wiseman said.

Accordingly, Wiseman said, he does not intend to allow Atalig to take advantage of

his own error and extend serving his sentence by any further amount of time.

Further, the judge noted, Myers is not and was at no point the attorney of record for Atalig.

Wiseman said in choosing to represent himself as a *pro se* defendant, Atalig certifies that he

is handling the matter without the assistance of an attorney.

"Mr. Myers cannot become

the attorney of record merely by filing a motion on behalf of a *pro se* defendant," he added.

Open enrollment for new health insurance policy this week

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The government announced yesterday that active employees and retired members of the pension agency have until Friday this week to decide whether or not they want to avail of the new insurance policy offered by Aetna Global.

The 2014 plan offers two health policies: the low option plan and high option plan. The main difference between the two is the amount of premium charged and whether provider coverage in U.S. is included in the plan. The low option does not include U.S. providers in its network and premiums are about 20 percent to 21 percent lesser than the high option.

An active employee's premium under the low option plan is \$97.70 for single; \$201.71 for couple; and \$314.70 for family category. For those who select the high option plan, the premium is \$123.65 for single; \$253.48 for couple; and \$395.67 for family. Aetna sets a deductible of \$500 for single, \$1,000 for couple, and \$1,500 for family.

Retirees who select the low-option plan will pay a premium of \$105.84 for single; \$218.53 for couple; and \$341.11 for family. The government's share under the high-option plan is \$133.95 for single retiree; \$274.60 for couple; and \$428.64 for family category. Deductibles are also similar to active employees, which is \$500 for single, \$1,000 for couple, and \$1,500 for family.

According to the government, retirees' premium appear higher than active employees' premium due to lesser pay periods—24 pay periods for retirees against 26 pay periods for active employees.

Members were reminded yesterday that if they are already enrolled in the group health program, they are automatically de-

faulted to the low-option plan.

However, if members wish to change coverage from low option to high option, they need to fill out an enrollment form indicating the change.

During open enrollment, "active government employees and retirees currently enrolled" in the plan will have the following opportunities:

■ First, an employee not currently covered by Aetna may apply for coverage for him/herself and dependent(s).

■ Secondly, if they are currently enrolled, are covered, and desire to make changes, members may change "plan coverage" to add or remove dependent(s).

■ Third, retirees currently enrolled in the plan may make changes.

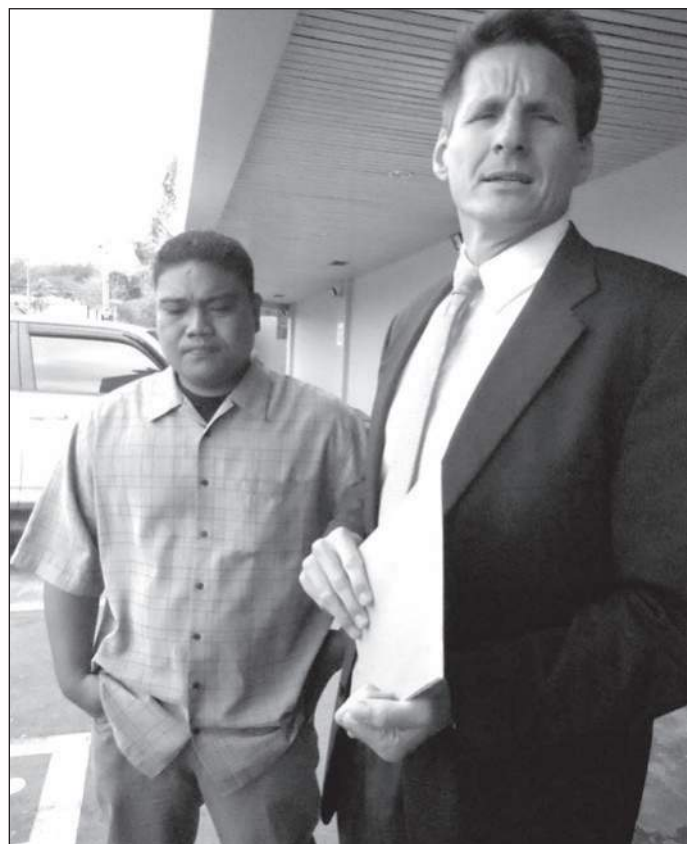
For members who are cur-

rently covered by Aetna policy and who do not wish to make any changes in the coverage, they are not required to re-enroll because coverage will automatically continue.

However, if members are currently covered by Aetna and want to terminate coverage, they must complete an enrollment/waiver/change request form or else coverage will automatically continue for them.

The government indicated that the new premiums should be reflected on employees' paycheck for the pay period ending March 8, 2014, while the same will be reflected on retirees' pension checks starting on the pay period ending March 15, 2014.

Approved enrollments and changes selected during the open enrollment will take effect on March 1, 2014.



NOT GUILTY

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Former Corrections officer Mariano Q. Falig Jr. and his counsel, Bruce Berline, face the media Tuesday afternoon last week, shortly after a federal court jury found Falig not guilty verdict of charges that he conspired to distribute methamphetamine or "ice."

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Frances Quichocho testifies in racketeering trial

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Frances Quichocho took the witness stand yesterday in the ongoing jury trial in federal court of businesswoman Jung Ka Kim's racketeering lawsuit against her and her husband attorney Ramon K. Quichocho, Quichocho's law firm, and their company. The Quichochos have also filed counterclaims against Kim.

Frances will resume her testimony today, Tuesday, but only after their rebuttal expert witness, Guam attorney Jacqueline Taitano Terlaje, completes her testimony.

Reps. Christopher D. Leon Guerrero (Cov-Saipan) and Janet Maratita (Ind-Saipan) also testified yesterday for the Quichochos. Leon Guerrero was hired by the Quichochos as an expert witness for financial crime investigation, while Maratita owns a house in Dandan that the Quichochos previously rented.

At the start of her testimony, attorney Michael Dotts, counsel for the Quichocho couple,

showed in court several family photos, many showing Ramon Quichocho and their daughter in different events and places.

Frances recounted how she met Kim when they moved to Kim's leased building in San Jose in March 2007.

"She was very friendly to me," said Frances, adding that they helped each other decorate the law office and apartment unit.

She said she formed the company Karissa LLC on Nov. 21, 2007, to assist in documents handling for Kim's many companies.

Frances said that by the end of March 2008, she and Kim had become closer and that Kim was like a sister to her husband, Ramon Quichocho.

Frances said she and Kim talked about her going into the poker business so in March 2008 she bought from Kim's company, Pacific Saipan, poker machines worth \$7,600 for Tan Dingo LLC.

Tan Dingo, she said, was formed by her husband's uncle, Joaquin Atalig, and was originally intended as a mas-

sage parlor.

She said she paid for the poker machines in cash at the time as she was not into banking due to what happened to Bank of Saipan, which went into receivership.

Frances said she was a member of Tan Dingo and that she bought the machines as representative of Tan Dingo.

She said in May and June 2008, Kim paid for the licenses of the eight machines at \$12,000 each per year.

Frances also talked about how Kim badly needed a new bank account; Kim borrowing her car to monitor the movement of her former husband; and Kim paying \$25,000 cash bail for the temporary release of her former husband.

Expert witness

Rep. Leon Guerrero, a former police officer, was accepted by the court as an expert on financial crime investigations. When the Quichochos hired him as an expert witness, Leon Guerrero was not yet elected and at that time was operating as a private detective.

The parties, however, agreed that Leon Guerrero's testimony will be limited only to his findings about indications of fraud.

In his report filed in court, Leon Guerrero said that he reached two opinions.

First, he said, Kim was using a series of corporate entities that she in fact controlled to hide assets from her ex-husband, the CNMI government, and others.

Second, he said, Kim was using other individuals to accomplish the same purposes of concealment as the corporate entities.

On questioning by Kim's counsel, Robert T. Torres, Leon Guerrero agreed with Torres that based on documents from November 2008 until December 2011 when Latte Stone Poker in Rota closed down, there was a gross of \$691,000 and that only \$339,000 was deposited into the company's bank account.

Leon Guerrero said he had no information that the remaining amount went to Kim. When asked who received

the money from Latte Stone, Leon Guerrero replied, "Of course, the person who operated the business"—Frances Quichocho.

Kim earlier testified that the Quichochos hijacked her company, Tan Dingo, that the Quichochos sold her out. She also testified that she put up Latte Stone company under Frances' name at Ramon Quichocho's advice.

Sherly Cruz, a former housemaid of the Quichochos, also testified yesterday for the Quichochos. She said, among other things, that the couple paid her salary through checks from Latte Stone, but that she

never asked why the company was paying her.

Latte Stone is a company that used to operate the Latte Stone Poker in Rota. Its ownership is being disputed by the Quichochos and Kim.

Cruz also testified that on Feb. 25, 2014, while the trial was ongoing in federal court, she told Kim that attorney Michael Dotts, counsel for the Quichochos, sent her a subpoena to testify in court.

Cruz said she told Kim that she does not know anything and that she's scared to testify. Cruz said Kim told her to hide in Managaha if she wants to avoid the subpoena.

FAMILY

From Page 1

Huang Xu.

"We want justice," said the family member, who asked not to be identified for security reasons.

The family member also disclosed that they're still waiting for the police to allow them to see the victims' bodies at the Commonwealth Health Center's morgue.

"Police said they will call us, but until now we keep on waiting," the family member said.

Lan Zhi Guan, the 65-year-old mother of Zheng, said she still has a hard time eating because she has been thinking all this time about her daughter, whom she described as very

loving and thoughtful.

Speaking through an interpreter, Guan said that when they were still in China, Zheng would always visit them (her parents) and bring them food even in winter.

Guan and her husband Jin Chuan Zhuang, and Jin Kai Hu, father of male victim Xu, arrived on Saipan with the victims' children, Xing Peng Xu, 13, and Li Lian Xu, 5, last Wednesday, March 5. The family wants to bring the victims' bodies back to China.

Police have classified the couple's death as a double homicide. The couple reportedly died due to smoke inhalation as a result of the fire that razed their house to the ground in As Gonno.

HOUSE

From Page 1

Dela Cruz asked Inos to veto the bill in its current form. The Tinian mayor is concerned about Section 104 of House Bill 18-179, House Draft that imposes a \$25,000 to \$100,000 fine or jail term or both for any person who engages in casino gaming activity "other than the sole casino licensed under this Act."

The bill's title itself states that it is to authorize, establish, and regulate "an exclusive gaming license within the Commonwealth."

"According to the advice I have sought on the bill, the minute you sign it, the Dynasty Casino will have to shut down. I ask you to please veto the bill and return it to the Legislature for further consideration," the mayor told the governor in a one-page letter.

Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino is the only operating casino in the CNMI. Casino gaming is legal only on Tinian and Rota. Once HB 18-179 HD4 is signed into law, casino gaming will also become legal on Saipan.

Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino general manager Tom Liu earlier said that Mega Stars Overseas Ltd. will still pursue its expansion plans for Tinian Dynasty despite the casino bill's passage.

The governor, in a brief interview after a Cabinet meeting yesterday on Capital Hill, reiterated that his office will carefully review the bill.

Earlier, Inos said he's leaning toward signing the casino bill but would seek the Legislature's immediate amend-

ment to address certain issues, including ensuring the tax rebate remains and that the exclusive casino license does not violate the NMI Constitution's land provisions, among other things. The House's technical correction yesterday means one less issue to be worried about, officials said.

"Pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives, a technical correction has been made to Section 4 of the bill to clarify the intent not to adversely affect the provisions of the rebate," the House said in its transmittal letter to the governor yesterday.

Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), main author of the Saipan casino bill, separately said in an interview yesterday that it was never his intention to scrap the tax rebate program, adding that there was an oversight on the bill's language that's already been corrected.

"It wasn't a deliberate intention to remove the tax rebate. It was an oversight on our part; it was overlooked. And if the governor signs it into law with recommendations to improve the bill, I will be the first one to propose amendments," Demapan told *Saipan Tribune*.

Alex Sablan, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, expressed relief yesterday after the House clarified that the tax rebate won't be adversely affected by the casino bill. He said tax rebate is "one of the last real investment tools to attract investors" in the CNMI.

However, Sablan believes that majority of the members of the largest business organization in the CNMI still oppose casino gaming on Saipan.

The Chamber of Commerce

will poll its membership this week on whether or not they want casino gaming on Saipan, Sablan said. He also said the Chamber's new executive director, Jill Arenovski, started working only yesterday and will work on the poll. Arenovski replaces Patrick Deleon Guerrero, who recently resigned from the post.

'A shame'

Besides asking the governor not to sign the casino bill, Tinian Mayor Dela Cruz also criticized senators who voted to pass the bill Tuesday night last week, especially the senators from Tinian where Dynasty is operating.

It was the first time in at least four years that the Senate approved a casino bill from the House.

"It is a shame that some of our senators, particularly senators from the Tinian Senatorial District, supported this bill without giving time for a properly legal review and a public hearing. Had they done so, they would have discovered the fundamental flaws in the bill and produced something that might have been amenable to all stakeholders," the Tinian mayor told the governor.

Dela Cruz was referring to Sens. Frank Borja (Ind-Tinian) and Joaquin Borja (Ind-Tinian), who were among the five senators who voted "yes" to the bill, along with Senate President Ralph Torres (R-Saipan), Senate vice president Victor Hocog (R-Rota), and Sen. Pete Reyes (Ind-Saipan).

The four senators who voted "no" were Sens. Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan), Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), and Jovita Taimanao

(Ind-Rota).

The casino bill requires the exclusive casino license holder to invest a minimum of \$2 billion inclusive of the casino and a new hotel with at least 2,000 rooms.

Within hours and days of the bill's passage at the Senate, lawmakers who voted against it raised concerns about the legislation's provisions including its chilling effect on video lottery and electronic gaming, as well as poker machines outside hotels on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

They also questioned whether the exclusive casino license holder for 40 years or 80 years is getting a sweetheart deal for being required to pay only a \$15 million annual license fee. But pro-casino lawmakers said the \$15 million is only the annual license fee and the casino license holder is still required to pay gross receipts tax, other fees and charges, along with the multiplier effects on the CNMI economy.

Under the bill, the casino investor must pay a nonrefundable \$1 million application fee and partial \$30 million license fee payment "within 15 days" of the bill's signing into law. These specific provisions also led some lawmakers to believe that the bill is tailored for a specific investor, who has long prepared at least \$31 million to have an exclusive casino license on Saipan. The governor said there have been a number of investors knocking on Saipan's doors—including those from China, Korea, Macau, Hong Kong, and the U.S. mainland, and this is the opportunity for them to come forward and apply for a license.

GROUP

From Page 1

they will also set up booths at public events where people can go to sign the petition.

"If we get the question on the ballot and most voters approve it, we would have a casino that has the input of the members of the public. We want to invigorate the economy," Cabrera told *Saipan Tribune*. He said if the question is rejected by voters, then the foundation will accept that result.

The MERDF seeks an integrated resort and tourism development that includes Saipan casinos, as well as agriculture, aquaculture, and pelagic fisheries.

The foundation is a local, non-profit organization whose board members are Saipan residents concerned with the lack of economic activities and opportunities, and are taking the initiative to reinvigorate Saipan's economy "by putting forth the question to the people in the upcoming election in November through a popular initiative."

Cabrera said they had been planning the signature drive for months, and were caught by surprise that the House casino bill would pass the Senate this time around. Just the same, he said the foundation wants to get input from the

public on the Saipan casino legalization proposal.

"In order for this initiative to be placed on the ballot in November of 2014, MERDF is seeking the help of the Saipan community with this petition drive to garner 4,000 signatures of registered voters in the Third Senatorial District. Please help revive our economy by signing up below," states the cover letter of the petition drive, a copy of which was obtained yesterday.

As of March 4, there are 12,861 registered voters on Saipan. The Commonwealth Election Commission said at least 25 percent or 3,251 of these registered voters' signatures are needed to be able to place the casino question on the ballot.

Saipan voters had already rejected twice legalizing casino gaming on Saipan; the last one was in 2007.

Lawmakers who support casino gaming said "times have changed" since the last vote.

Right now, the government has to find ways to restore the 25-percent cut in retirees' pension, pay some retirement contribution interest withdrawals, address the higher health insurance premiums, and ensure annual payment to the retirement settlement trust fund, on top of public services that need to be funded regularly.

Funding for swimming pool reprogrammed for new gym

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The much-awaited construction of a swimming pool at Saipan Southern High School will not happen anytime soon after funding for the project was reprogrammed again for another project—this time for a gymnasium adjacent to the proposed Koblerville Junior High School.

“We’re a little bit concerned

that the SSHS swimming pool money, I believe, has been reprogrammed to provide additional funding for the gymnasium for the new proposed Koblerville Junior High and that was done by the [Northern Marianas] Housing Corp.,” said Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero at a recent meeting.

The board approved the swimming pool project in Sep-

tember 2009 after SSHS secured a \$200,000 grant from NMHC’s community development block grant. However, this amount was reprogrammed by NMHC in 2011 to pay a portion of the government’s utility expenses. SSHS was promised the inclusion of the project in future CDBG funding.

But at the March 4 board meeting, Guerrero told his peers that the housing agency had redirect-

ed the money to the new gymnasium. He did not elaborate.

The gymnasium project is part of the master plan for the proposed Koblerville Junior High School. Funding for the school project has yet to be identified but PSS has already been approved \$1.2 million in CDBG funds to build the school’s gymnasium.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS will lose this CDBG fund-

ing if the housing agency fails to see a complete and functional gymnasium by September 2014. It was learned that the CBDG funding has been approved since 2012.

During the March 4 board meeting, Capital Improvement Project committee chair Marylou S. Ada reported that funding for the proposed Koblerville Junior High remains unidentified up to now.

“We’re still in the planning stage, trying to look for the best way to build a junior high, possibly through borrowing money,” said Ada, adding that a committee is negotiating this issue. The committee’s members are financial consultant Ed Tenorio, finance director Derek Sasamoto, federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh, Ada, and CIP committee member Herman Guerrero.

Full operation of hospital EHR system by end of September

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Center will soon have a fully functional automated system that will shorten the waiting time for medical records and billings.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. network director Tony Reyes disclosed that the Electronic Health Record system is scheduled to be fully operational by the end of the fiscal year.

Reyes said the project was first initiated at CHC on Nov. 3, 2013, and was primarily focused on inpatient areas. The project’s first phase centered on documentation, which includes vital signs, nursing notes and physician’s notes, and medication administration records, among others.

The second phase was rolled out on Feb. 3, 2014, and concentrated on computerized physician order entry, which also basically allows authorized nurses to go to EHR to place medication orders when deemed necessary.

At present, the hospital’s laboratory unit is among the sections that now use the electronic health record system, which allows the automated transfer of records to attending physicians.

For the other units, however,

Reyes said there remain some challenges in implementing the system, including the lack of manpower to do the work.

Reyes’ department has only two personnel doing all the work for the EHR project.

He said the project will eventually be expanded to the Rota and Tinian health clinics.

“This is not implemented yet on Rota and Tinian because we still have some issues to work on, including looking at cost-effective options to enable the connections between CHC, Tinian, and Rota,” according to Reyes.

Prior to expanding to the two islands, Reyes wants to see the EHR fully functional at the Kagman Community Health Center.

“We’re using the KCHC as test case to see what kind of telecom links are needed on the two islands,” he said.

Reyes disclosed that the cost of deploying the project to the two islands is close to \$5,000 a month, requiring about 1.5 megabytes.

“The staffing resources, unfortunately, is not also there to be able to conduct simultaneous deployment of the project [to all three islands]. What we’re trying to do now is set up the base infrastructure first at CHC so we can extend it to the two islands,”

he explained.

Reyes said CHCC plans to launch the system on Rota and Tinian by the third quarter of this fiscal year.

According to him, the challenges facing CHCC in imple-

menting the system are not unique. The CNMI, it was learned, is the first public hospital that implemented the project in the Pacific region. This will speed up the process by depopulating the information that many

coders normally do in a hospital setting.

Last year CHC received \$1.4 million as an incentive for the project after it demonstrated “meaningful use” of the system at the hospital. The next

incentive, amounting to \$1.1 million, is expected to come in once CHC satisfies the requirements of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Reyes said they intend to use the additional funds to procure more computers and laptops for the hospital and for the expansion on Rota and Tinian.

Couple sentenced for ‘ice’ trafficking

Husband-and-wife John A. Cruz, 47, and Mae Tedtaotao Cruz, 45, of Yona, Guam, were sentenced on March 6, 2014, by Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, in the District Court of Guam.

John A. Cruz received 78 months for his conviction of conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of methamphetamine and an additional five years for using, carrying or possessing a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. The five years are consecutive to the conspiracy charge. John A. Cruz was assessed a \$200 special assessment fee, 400 hours community service and five years supervised release.

Mae Tedtaotao Cruz was sentenced to 27 months imprisonment on the conspiracy charge, 400 hours community service, a \$100 special assessment fee and five years supervised release.

On Oct. 27, 2011, postal in-

spectors intercepted an Express Mail package and searched it pursuant to a federal search warrant; the package contained 86 grams of 91.1 percent pure ice. Agents secured a warrant to search the Cruz’s residence, where they were arrested. Agents seized, among other things, \$38,000 cash, five firearms (all registered); a Toyota Forerunner, an FJ Cruiser and two all-terrain vehicles. They later seized a Lexus SUV. All these items have been forfeited.

This case was investigated by special agents from the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Department of Homeland Security/Homeland Security Investigations, and officers from the Guam Police Department and Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency. The case was prosecuted by assistant U.S. attorney Clyde Lemons. (USAO)

PICKS OF THE WEEK 3

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*Some condition apply. 1 year agreement is required.

PSS execs: Prohibit CUC from charging schools late fees

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Instead of exempting public schools from paying late fees charged by the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., it would be better if CUC is prohibited by law from charging the non-profit Public School System with late fees.

Board of Education vice chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita and Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan told the Legislature this in a recent joint letter as part of their comments on a bill that proposes to exempt PSS from late fees imposed by CUC.

Citing the fiscal challenges faced by public schools, the two education officials urged lawmakers to amend House Bill 18-177 to reflect the recommended changes they desire.

"It will be helpful if the bill did not 'exempt' PSS from paying late fees charged by CUC but instead prohibited CUC from charging the late fees in the first place. Since the passage of P.L. 18-19 [which reduced the water and wastewater charges of schools], CUC continues to bill us at the government rate. Although we only remit payment based on a commercial rate for water and wastewater,

it is us who calculate that amount. This means that our financial department crunches our CUC bills every month to come up with the amount that we actually owe," stated Blanco-Maratita and Sablan in the letter to Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), chairman of the Transportation and Communications Committee of the House.

Because of this billing situation, PSS has to file a protest for each individual bill monthly in order to maintain the position that PSS only owes CUC the commercial rate. This, they said, takes a lot of effort and

wastes a lot of PSS' time.

"If the bill prevented the fees from being charged in the first place, we would save that time and put it to better use," they said.

Also, it is recommended that stronger language be inserted to protect PSS from CUC charging "other fees" that are basically "late fees" but are called something else.

"In order for PSS to reap the true benefit of this bill, it is imperative that CUC not have any wiggle room to charge PSS with what are effectively "late fees." This could include surcharges, reconnection fees, or interest on

such fees," they said.

Blanco-Maratita and Sablan also recommended that CUC be prohibited from terminating, interrupting, or disturbing services to PSS because of unpaid fees or unpaid utilities.

"CUC should not be able to use our children's right to an education as leverage to get money for utilities. This does not mean that PSS will not pay its bills or that it does not intend to pay its bills. Instead, this means that a children's right to an education will not be used as leverage," they said, adding that CUC will continue to have access to the

courts and will continue to be able to sue and collect money for what it is owed.

"What it will not be able to do is hold PSS functionality hostage," they said.

CUC is suing PSS, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., and the central government for unpaid bills amounting to \$5.9 million inclusive of late fees and interest.

PSS, according to Blanco-Maratita, has every intention of paying what it owes CUC, but it will be a great burden on PSS if late fees are included in the calculation.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Survivors, caregivers support meeting on March 20

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association monthly support meeting on Thursday, March 20, 2014, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com or cca@ccamarianas.org. (PR)

Free workshop on how to write a business plan

The CNMI Small Business Development Center will be hosting a free workshop titled "How to Write a Business Plan" on March 14, Friday, at the second floor of the Family Building in Garapan, from 10am to 12pm. It will be presented by CNMI SBDC director Perry Inos Jr. There are limited seats so register by calling 664-3018. (PR)

CCA board meeting March 18

The Commonwealth Cancer Association's board of directors will be holding its regular meeting on Tuesday, March 18, 2014, at 3pm at the CCA conference room. Agenda includes reports from the president and program updates. All board meetings are open to the public. For more information, contact the CCA at 682-0050 or email at cca@ccamarianas.org. (PR)

KHS parents offered incentive to participate

There is a new incentive for Kagman High School parents to get involved. Every event a KHS parent attends—from progress report to PTSA meetings to Literacy Nights—earns that parent a raffle ticket to be placed at the end of the year raffle. Grand prize is a flat screen TV! Raffle tickets cannot be purchased. They can only be earned. Parents can earn them by participating in their teen's education. Start with attending this third quarter progress report on Wednesday, March 12, at Kagman Elementary School, from 4pm to 6pm. (PR)

Ancient Chamorro rock art presentation Sat.

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council invites the public to a presentation on ancient Chamorro rock art that will be held at the Visitors Center Theater, American Memorial Park on Saturday, March 15, beginning at 6pm. Visiting archaeologist Dr. Rosalind Hunter-Anderson will present the results of a recent pilot study to determine the composition and age of several ancient images that were painted on the walls of the Mahlac Cave in Guam. This presentation is a part of the Council's ongoing Community Lecture Series. It is open to the public and free of charge. Call Council staff at 235-4787 for more information. (Humanities Council)

KHS reading workshop for parents

Kagman High School will be having a workshop on how to help your child learn how to use reading skills in all content areas. The event will take place on March 22, from 9am to 2:30pm, and April 10, from 5pm to 7:30pm, at the Kagman High School campus. There will be light refreshments and giveaways! For more information, contact the KHS main office at (670) 237-3840. (PR)

University Music Concert March 14-15

The University Singers and Jazz Ensemble will be performing songs from *Pitch Perfect* and *Sing-Off* at the University of Guam Fine Arts Theatre on Friday and Saturday, March 14 and 15 at 8pm. General admission is \$7. Senior and student admission is \$5, and children 12 and under are free. For more information, contact Dr. Randall Johnson at randalljohnson@guam.net or visit www.uog.edu. (PR)

WSR School shirts now available for sale

The last day to order William S. Reyes Elementary School shirts will be on March 28, 2014, Friday. Youth sizes XS-L and adult S-XL will cost \$10. Adult XXL and XXXL will be \$12. Please stop by the main office to place your orders. Available colors: Carolina blue, navy blue, royal blue, pink, yellow, gray, and black. (PR)



TYPHOON RELIEF

Golden Harvest International School teachers and their students eagerly show off their canned goods donations for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda that recently devastated some parts of the Philippines' Visayas region. Donations will be sent through LBC Mabuhay Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**

INVITATION FOR BID

ITB NO.: ITB14-BECQ-067

Submission/Opening Date: March 27, 2014 Time: 10:00 a.m.

**"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) VESSEL AND OUTBOARD ENGINE
FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY"**

Copies of the specifications may be picked-up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
Administrator of BECQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**

INVITATION FOR BID

ITB NO.: ITB14-BECQ-069

Submission/Opening Date: March 27, 2014 Time: 1:00 p.m.

**"PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF FIFTEEN COMPUTER SYSTEMS
FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY"**

Copies of the specifications may be picked-up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
Administrator of BECQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP: RFP14-CHCC-048

Submission Date: March 26, 2014 Time: 10:00 A.M.

**"REVENUE CYCLE MANAGEMENT FOR THE
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION"**

Copies of the RFP packet may be picked-up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

Any questions regarding this RFP may be sent to Ms. Esther L. Muna, CHCC CEO at esther.muna@dph.gov.mp no later than close of business, March 14, 2014. Responses to questions shall be shared with all prospective proposers.

The CNMI government reserves the right to reject any or all offers and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **ESTHER L. MUNA**
CEO - Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**

INVITATION FOR BID

ITB NO.: ITB14-CHCC-070

Submission/Opening Date: March 27, 2014 Time: 11:00 a.m.

**"PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A SERVER FOR THE COMMONWEALTH
HEALTHCARE CORPORATION - EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM"**

Copies of the specifications may be picked-up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfections in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

/s/ **ESTHER L. MUNA**
CEO - Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

BECQ takes a step forward with Garapan project



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The entrance beside Winchell's in Garapan has a drainage that runs down along the road up to Fiesta Resort & Spa. Tourists are seen here walking through water runoff and trash can be seen on the side. Eventually all of the water and trash will end up in the ocean.

The Bureau of Environment and Coastal Quality is taking steps to improve the tourist district of Garapan.

Kaitlin Mattos, watershed coordinator for BECQ, announced during last week's Saipan Chamber of Commerce meeting at the Pacific Islands Club that the Garapan Conservation Action Plan has been ongoing since 2012.

The project includes cleaning Garapan's storm drainages, which started on March 17, two days after the district-wide cleanup.

Mattos said that outreach programs such as a storm drain art contest, drain labeling, beach cleanups, and refrigerator magnets are also in the pipeline.

The storm drain art contest seeks to teach residents and tourists alike—through art—the importance of not dumping trash into storm drains. This is because storm water doesn't flow to sewer treatment plants but instead go directly into the ocean. Dumping trash in drainages will result in garbage eventually ending up in the ocean where people swim and fish.

Submissions are still being accepted up until March 18.

The Garapan Conservation Action Plan will also include public trash hauling as well as the placing of eight trash bins in Garapan. The bins will be four to eight cubic yards in size, with daily pick-ups. The program will start around this month up until April 2014.

According to the BECQ, trash-hauling will be enforced. In order for businesses to renew licenses or obtain zoning licenses and sanitary permits, applicants must have a valid contract with a permitted trash hauler or show tipping receipts from the Department of Public Works' landfill or transfer station or participate in the new public bin system.

For those lacking proof, they will be given a list of permitted haulers and the contact information for the public bin program. They will also be approached to join the public bin program. Those who fail to comply will have their business, zoning, or sanitary licenses revoked or not renewed and also be subject to scrutiny and enforcement action.

Other projects include the installation of grease traps, illicit discharge detection and elimination, and upland agriculture assistance.

The goal of the Garapan Conservation Action Plan is to maintain and improve the valuable natural resources that exist in the west Tapochao central sub-watershed and to coordinate efforts between stakeholders to provide the most benefits to the natural resources and the community that uses them.

"The Garapan watershed is the CNMI's 'Hafa Dai and Tirow' to the world and is the convergence of our economic, natural, and cultural resources," BECQ said. (Jayson Camacho)

OVR assists *man'amko* under ILOB program

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation visited the Office on Aging on Thursday to provide help under the Independent Living for Older Blind program.

The program was created to assist eligible individual *man'amko* with significant disabilities to live and function independently.

ILOB assistant caseworker Barbara Cabrera said the program "is designed to meet the needs of individuals whose disabilities are considered significant that they do not presently have the potential for employment but may benefit from in-

dependent living services."

The program also assists eligible individuals with vision loss by providing them with prescribed optical devices, if appropriate. It is intended to maximize the use of one's remaining vision, learn new ways to accomplish daily living activities, and take advantage of adaptive and computer technologies.

The program will be complemented by vision rehabilitation services such as counseling and training.

"It is for 55 years and over, and those not interested in working but want to continue

with independent activities, such as reading their rosaries," Cabrera said.

According to Cabrera, the outreach assisted five applications and will be visiting the *man'amko* on Rota and Tinian.

One *man'amko* applicant, Milan Fargo, said, "It is very helpful and I hope the assistance from this program will help me, and I am happy that someone came to help."

One other applicant felt the same way. "I feel good that they are helping me," Ana Nakatsukasa said in Chamorro.

Aging acting director Walter

Manglona told *Saipan Tribune*: "We are extremely happy to be working with our partnering agencies such as OVR, for taking care of our clients and providing our *man'amko* services because it is vital to be working in a much closer setting." (Jayson Camacho)

FSM's Mori to keynote PIU graduation

Federated States of Micronesia President Manny Mori has thanked Dr. Sam Mabini, provost and academic vice president of the Pacific Islands University in Guam, for inviting him to be the keynote speaker at the upcoming graduation ceremony for the university.

Mori accepted the invitation through his letter to Dr. Mabini, saying, "I am humbled by your consideration, and enthusiastically accept the invitation to deliver the keynote address at this important commencement ceremony."

"Over the course of your long history of service to our Pacific region, many Micronesians can call themselves PIU alumni, and have been the proud beneficiaries of the excellent education provided by your fine institution of higher learning; myself and my fellow FSM citizens remain deeply grateful for your dedication and tireless efforts."

The ceremony is scheduled for May 5.

PIU, through Mabini, has been advised to work out further details of the President's attendance at the graduation with staff of the FSM Consulate Office in Guam. (PR)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 5.1 of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's (NMHC) Section 8 Administrative Plan, this is to inform the general public that NMHC is opening its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program's (HCVP) waiting list and accordingly, will be accepting applications at the following places, dates, and hours:

NMHC Main Office	Wednesday, March 19, 2014 Thursday, March 20, 2014 Friday, March 21, 2014	7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Tinian Field Office	Wednesday, March 19, 2014 Thursday, March 20, 2014 Friday, March 21, 2014	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Rota Field Office	Wednesday, March 19, 2014 Thursday, March 20, 2014 Friday, March 21, 2014	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Interested individuals may access the application online at www.nmhc.gov.mp or at any of our offices. NMHC encourages families to download and print the application online then complete and submit it to our offices. NMHC Housing Specialists will review the applications and formally contact applicants to schedule an eligibility appointment.

Please be advised that the HCVP's waiting list will close **after** the end of the business day on Friday, March 21, 2014. For more information, please contact NMHC at telephone numbers 234-6866 or 234-9446 (Saipan), 433-9213 (Tinian), or 532-9410 (Rota).

Illegal pesticides still being imported, sold

The importation and selling of foreign and/or misbranded pesticides and pesticide devices is illegal, yet is still happening in the Commonwealth.

Products that may be imported or sold in the CNMI are legal products that are registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are properly labeled in the English language.

The Bureau of Environment and Coastal Quality said that all pesticides must be labeled with the name of the pesticide in bold letters, restricted use designa-

tion, description of which pests are controlled, chemical name of pesticide, active ingredients and percentages, inert ingredients, EPA registration number, patent numbers, directions for proper use and appropriate signal words such as caution, warning, or danger poison. Misbranded pesticides also refer to products that bear any statement, design, or graphic representation that is false or misleading.

A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroy-

ing, repelling or mitigating any pest. Many household products are pesticides and can include kitchen, laundry, and bath disinfectants and sanitizers. Products that kill mold and mildew are also considered pesticides.

The BECQ Pesticide Management branch is charged with the responsibility to regulate the importation, sale, and distribution of pesticides, legal or illegal, to ensure public health and a clean and healthy environment. BECQ staff regularly inspects business establishments

for any misbranded products. Should misbranded items be found, all misbranded pesticides will be confiscated and penalties may be assessed.

The CNMI Pesticide Regulations are available to any interested party. Call or visit the BECQ Pesticide Management branch at 664-8522, located along Chalan Pale Arnold at the Gualo Rai Center or visit the BECQ website at www.deq.gov.mp. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. **(BECQ)**

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Hyatt to mark St. Patrick's Day on March 17



The Irish stew is a traditional stew made from lamb. It is a celebrated Irish dish. It is the product of a culinary tradition that relied almost exclusively on cooking over an open fire.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Hyatt Regency Saipan has a cocktail inspired by St. Patty, called the Four-Leaf Clover. It is a beautiful mixture of whiskey, ginger ale, melon liqueur and mint leaves. It is priced at \$10 and is available at all Hyatt Regency bars.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hyatt Regency Saipan is inviting everyone to what it describes as "a good 'ol St. Patrick's Day" dinner this March 17 from 6pm to 9pm. Hyatt will be celebrating Ireland's world-famous festivity with a dinner buffet at the Kili Café and Terrace.

It will feature a "hearty and extravagant" Irish dinner buffet alongside a Four-Leaf Clover cocktail available at all the hotel's bars.

The dinner buffet will feature authentic Irish offerings including Irish stew, house-smoked salmon, lamb chops, and green velvet cake. There will also be steamed black mussel, Irish bread braid, garlic studded leg of lamb, Yorkshire pudding, baked Atlantic salmon, shepherd's pie, Irish apple and strawberry crumble, shamrock sugar cookies, and Irish bread pudding with whiskey-caramel sauce.

Dinner is inclusive of Miller

Lite, Barton & Guestier wine, and free-flowing Irish-inspired Four-Leaf Clover cocktail.

Prices are set at \$48 per person. Club at the Hyatt members are welcome.

Hyatt is partnering with Miller Lite, Barton & Guestier, and Pacific Trading Co. for this event. **(Jayson Camacho)**



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 4th birthday to my nephew, KeiKani Zephania Omar Castro! May the good Lord bless you and shower with lots of love! Greetings come from your Mommy, Daddy, Kaimana, family especially Auntie Lush.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 11, 2006

Casino industry on a roll

The Fitial administration will sign an agreement for a fourth casino investment on Tinian next week, the governor announced yesterday. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial also said that the administration has found a fifth investor that could take the final casino license that the gaming commission was allowed to grant under the Tinian gaming control act. According to the governor, the CNMI government and Baltimore-based Cordish Company will sign the memorandum of agreement next week. Cordish is reportedly looking to build a casino and golf course on Tinian. The minimum investment amount is about \$200 million.

Hotel investor eyeing Hopwood lot

An international luxury hotel company wants to use the Hopwood Junior High School property as the location of a new hotel on Saipan. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, who met with businessmen in Japan last week, reported that Okura Hotels and Resorts is eyeing Hopwood as the site for its new hotel. "They [Okura] have been eyeing the Hopwood property since 12-13 years ago. But I don't have a place to relocate Hopwood," Fitial said. "We could relocate Hopwood to Koblerville, but then it would be very close to Saipan Southern High School." Fitial added, however, that the planned relocation would not be done without proper consultation with Hopwood personnel and the parents of students at the middle school.

March 11, 2007

Tinian MRDC casino project hearing on Tuesday

Legislative committees on natural resources and economic development will conduct a public hearing next week on a Tinian casino investor's proposed lease deal with the Department of Public Lands. The public hearing will be conducted at the Tinian courthouse on Tuesday, March 13, 2007, at 6pm. During the hearing, the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs will accept testimony on the proposed lease agreement between DPL and Marianas Resort Development Co. Inc.

Traditional medicine conference draws 200 on Rota

The first ever traditional medicine conference on Rota attracted over 200 participants and spectators during its two-day conference on March 1 and 2. Amot Natibu Association officer and Northern Marianas College agriculture consultant Isidoro T. Cabrera said the conference drew participants from Saipan, Tinian and Guam. The theme for the conference was "Tungo 'Sumstieni I Amot-ta." Cabrera said the Rota event was bigger than the conference held on Saipan last year. The conference featured ways on how to concoct medicines using herbal plants as ingredients. These plants were displayed during the event.

March 11, 2008

NMC downgrade not surprising—McPhetres

Agnes McPhetres, a former president of the Northern Marianas College and newly appointed member of the Board of Regents, said she is not surprised with the college's downgraded status. "I was not surprised when I found out that the college was put on show cause. I did not expect it, but I was not surprised," said McPhetres. She said that she had already started to see signs that the college was "going down" so the news came as no surprise. McPhetres had been NMC's longest serving president.

Taotao Tano adopts public library

Advocacy group Taotao Tano CNMI Association Inc. has adopted the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in Susupe for their community cleanup activities, with the inaugural cleanup held Saturday, March 9. Gregorio Cruz, president of Taotao Tano, said that the group's adoption of the library was agreed on during the induction of six new board members and officers on March 5, 2008. "We all decided and agreed that part of our community work would be to assist educational institutions with volunteer work during these hard economic times. You know, there's no money to pay for cleaning up the library's yard, so we are volunteering our efforts to do this," said Cruz. He said the cleanup was a huge success, ending with a barbecue at the house of Taotao Tano board member Marvin Pangelinan.

New science curriculum OK'd for PSS

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Board of Education has approved a new curriculum that would elevate the Commonwealth's science programs to national standards.

Beginning school year 2014-2015, the Public School System will enforce the "Next Generation Science Standards" to better prepare CNMI students for globally competitive science careers, including in the field of engineering.

The current science standards at PSS were approved in the '90s and were last revised in 2005.

According to Jackie Quitugua, associate commissioner for instruction and curriculum, PSS began preparing for the shift to the new standards in 2010.

She said the Next Generation Science Standards will introduce CNMI students to different dimension of learning, including, among others, new science and engineering practices and the disciplinary core ideas that include three domains of science—life science, physical science, and earth and space science.

"We're looking at elementary through high school be

accorded the 'Next Generation Science Standards' so we are aligned with our vision to get our kids ready in the global society, with career and college vision in mind," said Quitugua.

BOE vice chair Lucy Blanco Maratita expressed worry, however, about the readiness of teachers for the full implementation of the standard next school year.

"Do our teachers and staff possess the knowledge and requisite skills to teach our kids this generation standards?" she asked at a recent board meeting, noting the lack of engineers on island that the PSS can tap for the program.

According to Quitugua, PSS survey results conducted among middle and high schools teachers show their readiness and capability to embrace the new curriculum.

In fact, she said, PSS has a list of teachers who have attended intensive trainings specifically for the new standards. Expert sources and PSS partners are also reportedly ready to provide assistance to the CNMI in implementing the new science standards.

"We are aggressively working with coordinators and ex-

pert panels outside the CNMI to help us and the only piece we're seeing support is the engineering piece. We do have teachers in the CNMI with engineering background and we have sought participation in the training design," she explained.

According to Blanco-Maratita, PSS still has a lot of work to do on instructional strategies required under the accreditation team's recommendation. She says it's important that PSS teachers possess the skills and professional training they need to enforce the new science standards. Based on documents provided to the board, Blanco-Maratita said that "it is really based on perception of teachers."

Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan made it clear that there's a difference between curriculum and instruction.

"The instruction is in place. So the curriculum we're bringing to the board is the science standards. Do you agree with us that we need to revamp our science standards now and bring the national standards wherein our students, when they go anywhere outside the U.S.... that they will be ready to participate in these science careers? We're asking the board to help us elevate the science curriculum to the national standards so students of the CNMI will be competitive," explained the commissioner.



Sablan



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPEN DATE: March 7, 2014
CLOSE DATE: March 14, 2014
POSITION: Cook (Mandarin, Korean, Western)
SALARY: Negotiable

Qualifications:
High school graduate or equivalent required. Formal training/education in culinary arts required. Minimum 2 years of experience in related field preferred. Position may require employee to receive food handler related health examinations and clearances as condition to their continued employment.

OPEN DATE: March 7, 2014
CLOSE DATE: March 14, 2014
POSITION: Server
SALARY: Minimum

Qualifications:
High school graduate or equivalent required. Minimum two (2) years experience in food service preferred. Position may require employee to receive food handler related health examinations and clearances as condition to their continued employment. Friendly personality, willingness to serve and a readily smiling individual highly preferred.

OPEN DATE: March 7, 2014
CLOSE DATE: March 14, 2014
POSITION: Lifeguard
SALARY: Minimum Wage

Qualifications:
High school graduate or equivalent required. Obtaining a lifeguard certification may be a required for continued employment. Must have friendly and outgoing personality

OPEN DATE: March 7, 2014
CLOSE DATE: March 14, 2014
POSITION: Bellhop
SALARY: Minimum Wage

Qualifications:
High school graduate or equivalent required. A valid Drivers License is required. Must be 25 years old or older. Experience as a hotel bellhop/ guest service preferred. Must have excellent people skills, willingness to provide service, friendly attitude and a ready smile.

OPEN DATE: March 7, 2014
CLOSE DATE: March 14, 2014
POSITION: Mechanic & Electrician,
SALARY: Negotiable

Qualifications:
High school graduate or equivalent required. Minimum of two (2) years of formal mechanical experience or mechanical training is required. Two years of experience in related field strongly preferred.

For more information, please contact the Human Resources Team at (670) 234-5900 ext. 274/266/576.

Employment application forms are available at the Saipan World Resort, Security Office, located next to the Wave Jungle/Water Park. Applicants must submit the completed form and all the necessary requirements to the Security Office. Incomplete application will not be accepted by the Security Office.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Restaurant General Manager (1)
Classification: Full-Time, Exempt, 50 hours per week
Department: Operations
Reports To: Area General Manager (AGM)

Summary of Responsibilities
Prioritize, directs and coordinates the activities of the restaurant to continually strengthen its Brand position and maximize its sales and profitability.

- Essential Accountabilities
- People:
 - Achieves management staffing and development goals to plan
 - Has active succession plan in place for all positions
 - Improves employee morale through monitoring and showing urgency in caring for employees
 - Improves staff performance through frequent personal and team coaching
 - Reduces incidences and claims by making safety everyone's top priority
 - Ensures compliance with all applicable laws
 - Financials:
 - Achieves sales and profit targets to plan
 - Corrects daily financial deficiencies with urgency
 - Drives year-over-year growth in sales and profit
 - Operations:
 - Delivers/improves delivery of QSC to franchise operational standards
 - Raises the bar in operational execution
 - Assets:
 - Corrects all asset deficiencies with urgency
 - Eliminates any potential for liability with urgency
 - Availability:
 - Open availability.
 - Minimum 5 day, 50 hour work week.
 - Vehicle required.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned.

- Required Skills
- Analytical: Able to analyze reports and correct deficient areas efficiently.
 - Problem Solving: Able to implement TOSIDPAR problem solving techniques to achieve desired results.
 - Organization & Planning: Able to organize priorities and develop/execute plans achieving desired results.
 - Coaching: Able to develop the skills of subordinates to perform at a higher level
 - Team Building: Able to stabilize staffing and build team bench.

Education/Experience
High school diploma and previous management experience required.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Requires standing and walking for the entire workday.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions.

Assistant Restaurant General Manager (1)
Classification: Full-Time, Non-Exempt, 40-45 hours per week
Department: Operations
Reports To: Restaurant General Manager (RGM)

Summary of Responsibilities
The Assistant Restaurant General Manager reports directly to the Restaurant General Manager. The ARGM assists the RGM in the achievement of the people, financial and operational goals of the restaurant.

- Essential Accountabilities
- People:
 - Assists RGM in achieving restaurant's staffing and development goals
 - Assists RGM in monitoring/ improving employee morale
 - Personally coaches staff
 - Ensures safety is everyone's top priority
 - Ensures compliance with all applicable laws
 - Financial:
 - Assists RGM in achieving sales and profits to plan.
 - Displays urgency to correct daily financial control deficiencies
 - Strives to drive year-upon-year growth in sales and profits
 - Operations:
 - Delivers/ improves delivery of QSC to franchise operational standards
 - Raises the bar in operational execution
 - Assets:
 - Ensures facilities are maintained to franchise standard on a daily basis
 - Displays awareness of asset deficiencies and urgency to correct them
 - Displays awareness and urgency to eliminate any potential for liability
 - Availability:
 - Open availability.
 - Minimum 5 day, 40 - 45 hour work week.
 - Vehicle required.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned.

Education/Experience
High school diploma and previous management experience required.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Requires standing and walking for the entire workday.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions.

Shift Manager (2)
Classification: Full Time, Non-Exempt, 32-40 hours per week
Department: Operations
Reports To: Assistant Restaurant General Manager (ARGM) Restaurant General Manager (RGM)

Summary of Responsibilities
The Shift Manager reports directly to the Restaurant General Manager. The SM assists the RGM in the achievement of the restaurant's people, operational and financial goals.

- Essential Accountabilities
- People:
 - Assists RGM in achieving restaurant's staffing and development goals
 - Assists RGM in monitoring/improving employee morale
 - Personally coaches staff
 - Ensures safety is everyone's top priority
 - Ensures compliance to all applicable laws
 - Financial:
 - Assists RGM in achieving sales and profits to plan
 - Displays urgency in correcting daily financial control deficiencies
 - Operations:
 - Ensures compliance with all applicable laws

EMPLOYER'S RIGHTS: This job description does not list all the duties of the job. You may be asked by your supervisors or managers to perform other duties. You will be evaluated in part based upon your performance of the tasks listed in this job description. The employer has the right to revise this job description at any time. The job description is not a contract for employment, and either you or the employer may terminate employment at any time, for any reason.

All interested applicants may get application at Pizza Hut Restaurant in Gualo Rai • Closing Date: March 17, 2014

Delivers/improves delivery of QSC to franchise operational standards.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned.

Education/Experience
High school diploma and previous management experience required.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Requires standing and walking for the entire workday.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions.

Crew Member (2)
Classification: Full-Time, Non-Exempt, 32-40 hours per week
Department: Operations
Reports To: Manager In Charge (MIC)

Summary of Responsibilities
Performs a variety of duties that may include the duties of a Telephone Person, Cashier, Register Person, Dough Person, Cut & Pack Cook, Maketable Pizza Preparer, Receiving & Stocking and Lot Person.

TELEPHONE PERSON
Essential Functions

- Answer telephone quickly within Pizza Hut guidelines.
- Clearly communicate to customers all specials and promotions.
- Accurately record customer orders on to POS system.
- Communicate to make table personnel any special requests.
- Keep counter and work area clean and organized at all times.

- CASHIER
Essential Functions
- Ensures an accurate accounting of all transactions, collections and disbursements during work shift.
 - Receives cash drawer at beginning of work shift and verifies the accuracy by counting money in cash drawer.
 - Obtains and reviews information regarding price changes or menu specials.
 - Greet guests as they enter the dining area or carryout area.
 - May take guests' food and beverage orders and give orders to kitchen staff.
 - Itemizes and totals guests' food and beverage purchases or may collect food and beverage checks from guests and ring them to the register.
 - Collects cash, checks, or charge payments from guests. Makes change for cash transactions, verifies identification for checks and prepares charge voucher for credit card purchases.
 - Counts money, checks, and charge payments in cash drawer at end of shift.
 - May reconcile checks, cash receipts and charge sales with total sales to verify accuracy of transactions.
 - Stocks counters, display refrigerators, salad bar, and steam table neatly, accurately and in a timely fashion as per menu.
 - Checks to ensure that all display foods are presented attractively as per standards.
 - Displays food under appropriate hot or cold conditions as per standards.
 - Keeps display equipment clean and free of debris during meal service, as assigned.
 - Cleans workstation thoroughly before leaving area assignment.
 - Relays relevant comments received from customers directly to supervisor.

- REGISTER PERSON
Essential Functions
- Responsible for providing quick and efficient service to customers.
 - Greets customers and takes their food and beverage orders.
 - Accurately records customer's orders on to POS system and computes the amount of the bill.
 - Serves drinks from dispensing machines or makes and serves hot drinks from water heater or coffee maker.
 - Picks up food items from serving bar or storage area.
 - Places items on tray or in take-out containers.
 - Checks orders to ensure that guest is receiving a complete and correct order.
 - Informs kitchen staff of shortages or special requests.
 - Collects payment from guest and makes change.
 - Helps with preparation of food in kitchen.
 - Helps with getting back up food on line
 - Washes dishes.
 - Informs manager of stock levels.
 - Restocks drink station/supplies, paper.
 - Checks supplies in counter area – napkins, crushed peppers and cheese, and restocks items to ensure a sufficient supply throughout shift.
 - Wipes off front counter with cleaning solution and clean cloth. Keeps counter and floor clean at all times.
 - Cleans and restocks dining room.
 - Takes trash out to dumpster.
 - Performs long-term maintenance on sidewalks, walls, and equipment.
 - Sweeps and keeps exterior lot clean at all times throughout the shift.

- DOUGH PERSON
Essential Functions
- Responsible for dough preparedness as prescribed from Manager In Charge
 - Complies with all portioning, quality standards, rules, policies, and safety procedures.
 - Selects and transports raw items to work area and back.
 - Stores finished products in proper places.
 - Selects proper equipment and utensils to prepare items as procedures require – dough mixer, whips, pitcher, proofer, bun-o-matic, retarder and dough roller.

- CUT & PACK COOK
Essential Functions
- Checks workstations for presence of small equipment, assembly materials, paper goods and condiments.
 - Responsible for product assembly, checks appearance and calls out preparation times for all orders.
 - Monitors oven setting according to Pizza Hut standards.
 - Checks all finished products to ensure compliance with Pizza Hut standards.
 - Communicates with make-table personnel, front line personnel and MIC for quality controls and feedback.

- MAKETABLE PIZZA PREPARER
Essential Functions
- Responsible and required to prepare and assemble all products according to customer's order and according to Pizza Hut portioning specifications.
 - Sets up the make-table by checking the worktable, counter, dough cabinets, and line refrigeration to ensure they are properly stocked prior to the meal production period.
 - Checks all workstations (make-table, pasta) for presence of appropriate small equipment, assembly materials, and stock levels.
 - Monitors all food production areas for safety and sanitation practices and procedures. Checks for cleanliness and orderliness and provides direction/takes action as necessary.
 - Sets up production cycles, ensure proper inventory levels are available, and calls to back up or replenish items as necessary.

- Reads order on video or printer as they appear. Calls out and coordinates specials/missing items to ensure quick service. Tracks preparation times on all orders (TITO), checks weight and appearance and passes item into oven.
- Periodically monitors need of food and materials supplies, takes action as necessary.
- Communicates clearly and effectively to food production personnel, receives information and feedback from them on their needs, and takes action based on observation and information received.
- Cleans and sanitizes workstations on an ongoing basis during meal preparation periods and at the end of the meal period.
- Monitors work of kitchen staff in the completion of their close-down duties and responsibilities.

WAIT HELP
Essential Functions

- Greets the guests as they enter the dining area.
- Clearly communicate to customers all specials and promotions.
- Take guests' food and beverage orders and give orders to kitchen staff.
- Attends to the needs of the customers.
- Clears table when guests leave.
- Wipes tables with cleaning solution and a clean cloth.
- Performs secondary duties such as phone order taking, product preparation and restaurant maintenance.
- Keeps dining area clean and organized at all times.
- Relays relevant comments received from customers directly to supervisor.

RECEIVING & STOCKING
Essential Functions

- Responsible for the receipt and storage of all food, supplies and materials received in the restaurant using proper EXPERT, FIFO and Pizza Hut procedures.
- Receives all food, supplies, and materials.
- Checks all incoming items for count, quality and specification.
- Ensures that items are received and stored at the proper temperatures.
- Maintains the completion and compliance of all delivery and inventory records as defined by proper Pizza Hut procedures.
- Keeps all storage areas and inventory in a neat and orderly fashion.
- Maintains the quality of the restaurant products by ensuring that all inventory are dated properly before storing to effect proper FIFO usage.
- Maintains the safety of the restaurant by ensuring that all storage areas are free of hazardous conditions.

LOT PERSON
Essential Functions

- Receives assignment from Manager In Charge at the start of shift.
- Maintains cleanliness and sanitation of dining room including all tables, chairs, support bars, floors, windows, and trash receptacles.
- Cleans and restocks drink station with ice and lids as needed.
- Cleans and restocks restroom facilities with soap, toilet tissue and paper towels. Empties trash containers, cleans walls, doors, basin, mirrors, floors and toilets.
- Maintains exterior cleanliness from litter and debris. Checks lighting, windows, landscape, parking lot, sidewalks, trash coral and signage.
- Communicates with manager in charge to maintain cleanliness efficiency and ensures guest satisfaction. This includes assisting guests with trays and opening doors.
- Follows priority sequence on lot checks, should take care of any eye soars first, such as spilled drinks, over flowing trash receptacles, etc.
- Return trays to designated area to be cleaned.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned.

Abilities, Knowledge, and Skills
Able to understand and implement written and verbal instructions. Communicates clearly, courteously and efficiently with customers in English. Must possess basic math skills.

Required Experience
Food service and food production experience preferred. Cash handling experience preferred.

Education/Experience
High school diploma and previous management experience required.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Position requires well-paced mobility for minimum periods minimum of four hours. Requires standing and walking for the entire workday. Must be able to bend and stoop occasionally. Must be able to occasionally lift 25 lbs.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions

Delivery Driver (1)
Classification: Full Time, Non-Exempt, 32-40 hours per week
Part Time, Non-Exempt, less than 32 hours per week
Department: Operations
Reports To: Manager In Charge (MIC) / Dispatcher

Summary of Responsibilities
Delivers customer's order in a timely and safe manner within accordance of Pizza Hut guidelines and compliance with State and Federal traffic laws.

Essential Functions

- Drives competently and complies with all traffic laws.
- Delivers products in a timely manner with accuracy and courteousness.
- Collects checks, cash or credit card slips to properly tender order.
- Performs secondary duties such as washing dishes, cleaning, prep and cooking duties.
- Keeps car and work area clean and organized throughout shift.

Other Functions
Performs other duties as assigned.

Education/Experience
High school diploma preferred.

Abilities, Knowledge, and Skills
Must be at least 18 years of age. Must possess a valid CNMI driver's license with a minimum of 2 years driving experience. Must have an acceptable driving record. Must provide own insured vehicle for deliveries. Able to read and follow road maps. Must be able to speak, read, write and understand English. Must be able to communicate clearly, courteously and efficiently with customers.

Physical and/or Medical Requirements
Must obtain a Tuberculosis Clearance Certificate. Position requires well-paced mobility for a minimum of four hours. Requires driving, standing and walking for most of the workday. Must be able to lift 25 lbs. occasionally.

Working Conditions
Minimal hazards. General restaurant working conditions.

Opinion

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Re-examining the SAT

Less than a decade after it started requiring students to write an essay as part of the SAT, the College Board announced Wednesday that it is eliminating that portion of the test. At the same time, it will do away with certain obscure vocabulary words and the penalty for inaccurate guesses. These are good moves, but they don't answer the fundamental question of whether the standardized test should continue to be a part of the college application process, especially after a new study found that it is a poor predictor of whether students will succeed in college.

The mandatory essay was never a helpful addition to the test. Students were expected to write it in less than half an hour, and there was no requirement that they back up their opinions with accurate information; in our opinion, it provided little if any information to colleges about how well an applicant could write or think. What's more, it favored those who wrote a lot over those who wrote well, and rewarded those who used a multisyllabic vocabulary. It will be replaced by a new, optional essay in which students will analyze the arguments of a written passage.

With more colleges shifting to the rival ACT, and many colleges making both tests optional, the College Board is clearly struggling to keep its signature product relevant. But there is an inherent problem with a high-stakes test that so clearly benefits affluent students who can afford to pay for private tutors and multiple test sittings. Chucking the essay and changing some of the questions don't fix those problems.

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China's unrest

The Chinese government's difficulties with the Uighur minority in its western-most Xinjiang region seem to be increasing despite Beijing's efforts to integrate it and its people with the country's Han-speaking majority.

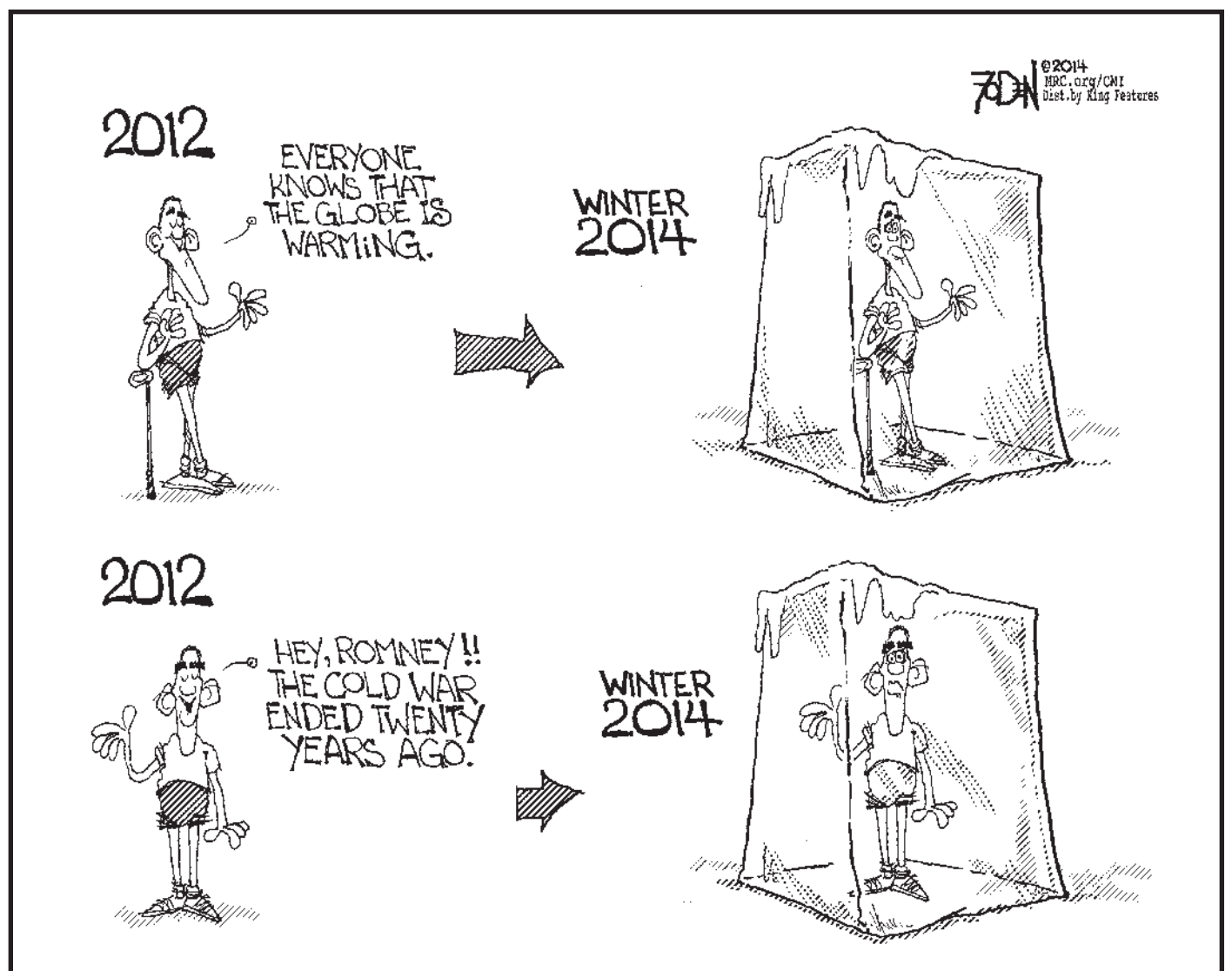
The Uighurs have consistently resented Han Chinese efforts to control their region. One instrument Beijing has used is flooding Xinjiang and cities such as Kashgar and Urumqi with Han-speaking immigrants. The Uighurs see this effort not only as reducing their economic and political prospects, but also as a Beijing attempt to obliterate their culture and religion.

They have become increasingly violent in their efforts to resist. On March 1, a knife attack, apparently carried out by Uighurs, at a railroad station in the city of Kunming, outside the Uighur area, killed 29 and wounded 143. Previous violent Uighur resistance has occurred within their areas of strength, particularly in Urumqi in 2009.

In general, Beijing has not showed particular aptitude at dealing with its minorities, not only the Uighurs but also, better known, the Tibetans. Tibetans in recent months have increased self-immolations and Beijing took offense at President Barack Obama's meeting at the White House with their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, even though Washington took pains to soft-pedal the event.

Violent attacks should not be rewarded by any government. At the same time, Beijing might try adding dialogue and inclusion to its repertoire of means of working with China's ethnic and religious minorities. It is hard to imagine that the Xi Jinping government in Beijing can believe in 2014 that retaliatory violence and economic submersion can work in the long run in a modern country in dealing with the Uighurs or the Tibetans.

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To Sir with Love

Last week, I was "sir" to many people, mostly among the *Pinoys*, though a few of the children of mom-and-pop stores said the same from probably being told in school that it was a polite way of addressing older males, as *lao ye* (literally, old man, in *Zhonghua*) is used for "uncle" in conversational discourse in China.

To Sir with Love, directed and screen-wrote by James Clavell of *The Great Escape* and the *Noble House* fame, had Sidney Poitier teaching in London's East End inner city. A movie on social and racial issues, a classic line was when Poitier's character cut himself and one of the students acted surprised that the teacher had red blood. The retort from one of the students was: "What did you expect, black ink?" The social issue was radical at the time, especially with Poitier being so prim and proper, while the east-enders, all white, were rowdy and rebellious.

I was reminded of the movie because it was one of the classics on the plane coming over, and because I was "sir" in so many places. With mostly Pilipinos at my hotel, I was "sir" right, left, and center. At the little fruit stall and grocery store next door, it was the young fluent-in-English Chinese who called me "sir," especially when they discovered that I taught English at a known university in the northeast of China.

However, it was the stares in many places that got me uncomfortable since I did not know if I resembled a vicious criminal; I definitely did not pass for a movie star. Most of those who realized that I wrote a column were professionals, heartening in that two actually remembered what I wrote. But the *coup d'grace* was an Ilocano vegetable farmer at the Tuesday market across the Gualo Rai Church who called me by name. He said that he let his children read my articles so he can show them how and how-not-to write in English. I appreciated his candor.

Earlier, Herman of BoE commented on my writing while teaching 6th grade at SVES, that I specifically wrote for the BoE members to teach them how to use the dictionary and the encyclopedia, should they follow my literary output. The vegetable vendor relished the tale as it resonated in his experience. I did not have much time to go around the island as I only rented a car for two days, but I managed to greet fellow 6th grade teachers at SVES. It also revealed the gap in my info bank as I mistook one as the principal of the school rather than her sister.

Being a retired teacher in China, and having reasons to return to Saipan, I was tempted to go up to PSS to check if they can use my services as they are reportedly going to release substitute teachers and concentrate on full-time Praxis I and II passers on staff. The notion remained a thought. My bones may have revealed themselves to be already brittle, and I do occasionally slip on the ice in *Dong Bei*,

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.

but meeting the pedagogical challenge where I am provides more psychological income than hassling the bureaucratic structures (no offense intended) abiding in our island's educational system.

A visit to USCIS was very comforting as one of two officers on duty wondered why my name was familiar; another thought I was recognizable. There must be a shortage of entertainment on island if both fed officers occasionally have my musings on their reading list. Ditto for the guy at SS who remembered my last visit more than three years ago and still glances at what I scribble on op-ed during breaks.

I went up and said "hello" to two politicians. One was pleased when I greeted him as "Mr. Politician." I probably might remember a couple of faces up Capital Hill, and though it might have been useful to reintroduce myself to the governor who I ran into once while in transit at Narita, I decided not to drive up the incline to Mt. Tapochao. It would have been a delight to say "hi" to a colleague at Finance, but I'll just do my "howdy-do" by email. Ditto to a fellow member of the old STaRPO at Retirement.

One might say that I had seen too many movies in my time, and perhaps that has an element of truth since I tend to remember some while I reminisce. Lead co-stars Ingrid Bergmann and Anthony Quinn co-produced *The Visit* in '64. The Bergmann character left an Italian town in disgrace and returned as a fabulously rich woman who tried to extract revenge on the Quinn character by bribing the town folks, who resisted at first, then they finally acquiesced.

Saipan remains one of three places I call home, including Shenyang in China and Honolulu of Oahu in Hawaii, but I do not have any enemies (plenty *frenemies*) to come back to, nor was I driven out of town when I left. But the visit this week (I counted pennies so I was no Bergmann character) had an intensity that haunted memories while seriously magnetized future considerations.

Not to be syrupy, but I left paraphrasing Wordsworth: "For yesterday was but a dream, and tomorrow, only a vision; but today, well-lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow, a vision of hope."

L'achaim!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Suabe na sunidu

An finagcha'e manadan sustansiau na asunto man-a'atope gi hinasoghu, hu dandan pa'gu suabe na sunidu 'nai hohoŋga uchan, milag hanom, katen pajaru, maŋglu' yan hulu. Adumididi' hana' pasifiku siñiente-ghu antes de bai chogue otro 'kosa.

Memegaiña besis na i minetgot hinasoghu muna' katmayu' sa libi-anu hu tobus haf' ti presisu. Lau paire i gaige suabe na dandan piano yan gitala gi santatte mientras sige hu katsayu' para bai' fañgge'.

Kanta yan dandan, dañkulu benefisioña piot gi famaguon. Estuidi siha kumonfitma i adelantu gi patgon ni guimuiya dandan. Maseha haf' ha dadandan 'sino kanta, sotta ya u sige umeyag.

Siña i sotfa kumone' 'sino i palabra ni matuge' gumu'ot attensioña. Sige ha kanta katkuet lugat. Dispues repara sa' kontentu en-nau na patgon mientras sige ha usune otro siha inayeg. Nae' kampu ya u adelantague'.

Kanta yan dandan kulan kuadrin linala'ta ni patte gi ha'anita. Guaha na sunidu ta pega gi lugat, atuŋgo'ta, mañainata, cheluta, yan finaposta siha. Estague' na sasyan kumokone hit guatu gi hagas "chalan iya hame". Motmut memorias kulan mohon nigap ha' 'nai man-estabe hit gi hagas guma' familia.

Hu huñgog un' palao'an ha kanta, "Maisa Sin Maisa". Era, sessu guiguia ha' diariu. Ha tuñgu' na ti amtiyon esta chenotña kanset. Ti nina' chatsaga siñienteña sa' ha pega inaŋgoghoña entaramiente gi adeñg yan disposision i Saina. Ayu mina' ilelegña "Maisa Sin Maisa".

Pot man-tautau hit mina sumen nachatsaga 'an ta konsidedera haf' mohon gaige gi hinassoña 'an ha atan familiaña ni man-patte diariu gi ha'aniña. Buente esta halie' ma'lag haf' mamamaila' ayu na tai tiempu puminite. Magof maseha didog pinadesisiña. Ti komprendiyon. Maisa Sin Maisa. Si Yuus u binendise!

Ukraine must become a bridge between East and West

Public discussion on Ukraine is all about confrontation. But do we know where we are going? In my life, I have seen four wars begun with great enthusiasm and public support, all of which we did not know how to end and from three of which we withdrew unilaterally. The test of policy is how it ends, not how it begins.

Far too often the Ukrainian issue is posed as a showdown: whether Ukraine joins the East or the West. But if Ukraine is to survive and thrive, it must not be either side's outpost against the other—it should function as a bridge between them.

Russia must accept that to try to force Ukraine into a satellite status, and thereby move Russia's borders again, would doom Moscow to repeat its history of self-fulfilling cycles of reciprocal pressures with Europe and the United States.

The West must understand that, to Russia, Ukraine can never be just a foreign country. Russian history began in what was called Kievan Rus. The Russian religion spread from there. Ukraine has been part of Russia for centuries, and their histories were intertwined before then. Some of the most important battles for Russian freedom, starting with the Battle of Poltava in 1709, were fought on Ukrainian soil. The Russian Black Sea Fleet—Russia's means of projecting power in the Mediterranean—is based by long-term lease in Sevastopol, in Crimea. Even such famed dissidents as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Joseph Brodsky insisted that Ukraine was an integral part of Russian history and, indeed, of Russia.

The European Union must recognize that its bureaucratic dilatoriness and subordination of the strategic element to domestic politics in negotiating Ukraine's relationship to Europe contributed to turning a negotiation into a crisis. Foreign policy is the art of establishing priorities.

The Ukrainians are the decisive element. They live in a country with a complex history and a polyglot composition. The western part was incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1939, when Stalin and Hitler divided up the spoils. Crimea, 60 percent of whose population is Russian, became part of Ukraine only in 1954, when Nikita Khrushchev awarded it as part of the 300th-year celebration of a Russian agreement with the Cossacks. The west is largely Catholic;

I otro sunidu pot un' cowboy ni sessu mañugon tropan guaka gi disettu mas ke sientu miyas diariu. Dispues de bente siñko años, mañgge' kantaña na un' dia u deskansa gi papa' asut na mapagahes disettu ni sessu ha falofangue, diariu.

Bonitu na sunidu hombre esta hana' mesgu lago'hu 'nai hu e'ekuñgog pinedoñg sentimientoña. Un' sunidu motmut agradesimientu pot i lugat 'nai mafañagu. Magahet, ti tulaikayon i bonito na tanu' 'nai mafañagu kada unu.

Todu klasen modun ekspresiu ta huñgog gi sunidun natibu siha deste antes. Un' tiuhu sessu hu huñgog kulan ume'e mahalañg ya ilelegña, "Gi primet agua, bai' birayu' tatte gi lanchun sabana".

Hagas madispone asaguña lau tatnai magtos ha kantaye ni intensioña. Sumen bonito lokue' na tunada ha pega gi kanta. Kulan hu dimimoria ya un' dia bai' ke dandan gi gitalahu pot para in' hiñgog. Bonitu na kanta.

Hu soda' lokue' un' biha sige kumantan gui'eñg (humming) man-na mahalañg siha na tunada. Hu atrebiyu' fumaisen haf' tatatmanu-gue'.

Ti matman ha sañganeyu' pot gastun 'an amamku' i tautau. "Pa'gu, man-atkililayu' lugathu ni sumasaunau apas kandet. Maul leg na guaha Medicaid ni kumubre apas amot yan setbisiyun mediku. Haf' no para uttimoghu 'an un' diayu' kumama?" Buente ume'emahalañg i amku' pot appenas mabisita ni famaguoña.

Antes na tiempu, i lalahe muna' sesetbe kantan natibu para umana' tuñgu' i ma-intendedet na palao'an haf' intension niha. I palao'an pa'gu u hoka i sustansian kanta ya guiya u respuesta. Kulan mohon un' dagau chagu' fino'mu piot ya tataya' kampun konbetsasion. Pues i mensahen i kanta kumilili' intensionmu.

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of Department of Public Lands.



Hu huñgog kase mit na membron koru ginen Tonga mañganta gi halom gima' Yuus niha. Diberas, suabe gi kuattru patte kada sunidu. Ayu na biahe 'nai masyu hihot gi pettan i lañget. Un' pasu ta'lu ya humalomyu'. Diberas, paire na sunidun kabales na koru.

Mina' yahu lokue' kantan Hawaiian pot masen tuñgu' masegun-duye todun kantan niha. Bonitu na sunidu gi dos, tres 'sino kuattru patte. Yahu lokue' Chamorro mañganta lau man-disintunau. Debi uma-usa mauleg talañgan niha sa' sessu mapega gi betsan santatte. De dios mihu!

Guaha gi halom esta man-hanau diberas tai akomparasion boniton bos niha. I mas kumoneyu' si defuntu Juan Teregeyo' (Juan Agida). Suabe na kakanta yan anchu ha taka' hulu' yan papa' i sotfa sin u fontun mientras kumakanta. Taya' trabiha hu lilie' hihot yan si defuntu Iku.

Apmam lokue' siha kumondukta korun gima Yuus Chalan Kanoa era i defuntu Señor William S. Reyes yan asaguana, kontodu Tun Josen Fitial yan hagaña Domina. Ta hahassu siha gi tinayuyot-ta pot apmam de man-mañietbe gi gima Yuus.

By HENRY A. KISSINGER
McClatchy-Tribune Information Services

Henry Kissinger is one of the world's most influential commentators. He draws from his experience as both a U.S. secretary of state and a national security adviser to deliver unparalleled insight into international policy developments, diplomatic challenges and the historical backdrop to current events.



- (1) Ukraine should have the right to choose freely its economic and political associations, including with Europe.
 - (2) Ukraine should not join NATO, a position I took seven years ago, when it last came up.
 - (3) Ukraine should be free to create any government compatible with the expressed will of its people. Wise Ukrainian leaders would then opt for a policy of reconciliation between the various parts of their country. Internationally, they should pursue a posture comparable to that of Finland. It leaves no doubt about its fierce independence and cooperates with the West in most fields but carefully avoids institutional hostility toward Russia.
 - (4) It is incompatible with the rules of the existing world order for Russia to annex Crimea. But it should be possible to put Crimea's relationship to Ukraine on a less fraught basis. To that end, Russia would recognize Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea. Ukraine should reinforce Crimea's autonomy in elections held in the presence of international observers. The process would include removing any ambiguities about the status of the Black Sea Fleet at Sevastopol.

These are principles, not prescriptions. People familiar with the region will know that not all of them will be palatable to all parties. The test is not absolute satisfaction but balanced dissatisfaction. If some solution based on these or comparable elements is not achieved, the drift toward confrontation will accelerate. The time for that will come soon enough.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Step down, governor

If you want to continue to lose 25 percent of your pension, vote for "Inos-Torres." If you want an "I don't know" governor, vote for "Inos-Torres." Gov. Inos was chosen to be lieutenant governor by the soon-to-be extradited former governor Fitial. When Inos assumed the post of governor, he had no plan how to run the Commonwealth. He did, however, run it to the ground. To

make matters worse, he chose Senate President Ralph Torres to be lieutenant governor as running mate. Sen. Ralph Torres is a frequent flyer. He had numerous off-island trips without letting his colleagues know where he would be. Same when he was sitting as a representative. Do you really think they have a plan for the Commonwealth? Remember that the Republican Party members were the members of the once powerful Covenant Party. Same old folks with the same old jokes. Promises, promises, promises.

As for the casino, we need the money now! Do you think that legalizing the casino is the answer? Look at the bill, governor. It is custom-made exclusively for one investor. The referendum is coming and so is an impeachment. I thought the buck stops with Fitial but work still needs to be done. We need a governor who has a better answer than just saying, "I don't know."


Vince G. Cabrera
Chalan Piao, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian


TODAY



Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.

▲ 87° ▼ 75°


WEDNESDAY



Partly cloudy and windy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 30 mph.

▲ 88° ▼ 75°


THURSDAY



Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers.

▲ 86° ▼ 75°


FRIDAY



Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲ 88° ▼ 75°

SATURDAY



Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

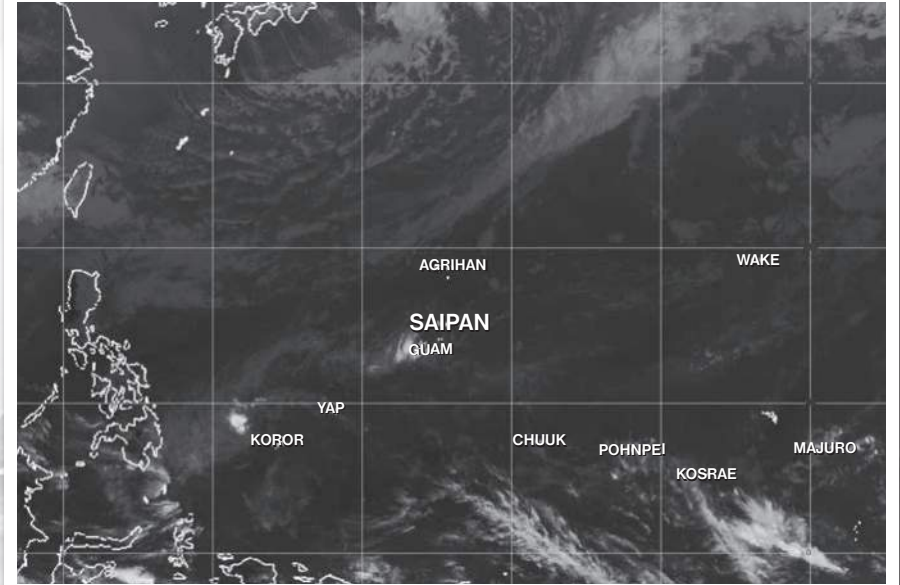
▲ 88° ▼ 76°

Micronesia			
Guam and Rota	Windy	▲ 83	▼ 76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲ 86	▼ 74
Yap	Showers	▲ 87	▼ 76
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 85	▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 87	▼ 77
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 87	▼ 77
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86	▼ 81

Around The Globe			
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲ 72	▼ 61
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲ 52	▼ 27
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲ 70	▼ 65
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲ 80	▼ 69
London	Partly Cloudy	▲ 55	▼ 39
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲ 76	▼ 56
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 87	▼ 76
Melbourne	Rain	▲ 66	▼ 51
Miami	Sunny	▲ 81	▼ 70
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲ 57	▼ 39
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲ 60	▼ 52
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲ 64	▼ 41
Pusan	Showers	▲ 60	▼ 44
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲ 62	▼ 43
Salem	Sunny	▲ 60	▼ 35
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 69	▼ 50
Seoul	Showers	▲ 49	▼ 31
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲ 57	▼ 46
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲ 67	▼ 47

Tides			
Saipan Harbor			
6:17 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
11:30 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
4:25 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
11:52 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



Picture Time: 1:00PM, Monday, March 10, 2014

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front curves southwestward from near Minami Tori Shima at 25N150E to beyond 130E at 16N. Cloudiness and scattered showers are occurring along and up to 150 miles northwest of the front. A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from a circulation centered northwest of Koror near 8N133E to EQ152E. Scattered showers are located mainly northwest of Koror within 150 miles of a line from 7N131E to 12N133E to 14N138E. A diffuse shear line stretches eastward near Guam from 12N138E to 12N145E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found primarily west of Guam along and up to 80 miles north of this boundary. Weak trade-wind disturbances are generating scattered showers southeast of Kosrae south of a line from 3N164E to 3N171E and southeast of Majuro within 150 miles of a line from 7N172E to 2N180.

Sunrise/Sunset			
Today	6:28 AM	6:27 PM	
Wednesday	6:27 AM	6:27 PM	
Thursday	6:27 AM	6:27 PM	
Friday	6:26 AM	6:27 PM	
Saturday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM	

Moonrise/Moonset			
Today	2:03 PM	2:19 AM	
Wednesday	2:51 PM	3:03 AM	
Thursday	3:40 PM	3:45 AM	
Friday	4:28 PM	4:26 AM	
Saturday	5:16 PM	5:06 AM	

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

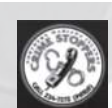
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 25, 2014									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)					GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN				
UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily		UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily	
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	Daily		UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	Daily	
UA5039	1:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota		UA5039	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	
					UA5038	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota	
UA5038	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6		UA5077	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily	
UA5078	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily		UA5079	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily	
UA5072	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily						
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)					GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				
UA5039	1:35pm	2:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7		UA5038	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6	
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)					ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN				
UA5039	2:40pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7		UA5038	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6	
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)					OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN				
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily		OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily	
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)					NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN				
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily		DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily	
DL297	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily		DL288	8:55pm	1:30am+1	Daily	
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)					BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN				
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	1, 4, 5, 7		OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7	
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)					SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN				
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1		DZ101	8:30am	2:00pm	3	
OZ102	2:20am	5:50am	3		OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily	
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7		OZ103	7:30pm	1:00am+1	6	
OZ6063	3:30am	7:20am	4, 7 (will increase eff Jan 29)		OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7	
					OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
DZ104	2:00pm	5:30pm	6		OZ6053	9:10pm	2:30am+1	3, 6 (will increase eff Jan 29)	
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily						
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)					SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN				
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7		3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7	
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)					BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN				
MU764	4:00am	8:00am	1, 5		MU763	7:20pm	3:00am+1	4, 7	
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)					GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN				
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6		3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5	
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN				
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN		OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily	
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		PR110/UA5072	7:35am	5:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:05am	3, 6 via GUM		DL172/288	7:45am	1:30am+1	Daily via NRT	
DL287/473	6:00am	10:55pm	Daily via NRT		UA190/5077	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 7 via Guam	
UA5068/PR111	8:40am	4:45pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM		UA190/5079	10:00am	5:35pm	3, 6 via GUM	
					OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
UA5039/183	1:35pm	9:30pm	5 via Guam		OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
UA5039/183	1:35pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Guam		UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM		UA184/5071	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM	
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN						
UA5078/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM						
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN						
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)					HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN				
OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN		OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN	
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN	
					OZ724/605	1:50pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN	
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM		UA180/5071	11:10pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM	
UA5038/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM						
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN						
SAIPAN-TIANJIN (TSN)					TIANJIN (TSN)-SAIPAN				
D2884	10:45am	2:45pm	Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24		D2885	4:45pm	12:20am +1	Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24	
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)					HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN				
D2880	4:30pm	8:00pm	Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27		D2881	10:00pm	5:15am +1	Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	
SAIPAN-WUHAN (WUH)					WUHAN (WUH)-SAIPAN				
D2882	11:00am	3:15pm	Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26		D2883	5:15pm	12:20am +1	Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE									
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency		
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily		
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily		
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily		
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily		
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily		
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily		
Rota-Saipan									
FRE 170	17:50	18:20	Daily						
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan					
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily		
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily		
FRE 400	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily		
Saipan-Rota				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily		
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily		
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily		
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily		

Business

Lack of passport checks expose air security flaw

PARIS (AP)—When you travel, airport security agents may pat you down, inspect your deodorant and scan your body from head to toe. But there's a good chance that no

one's checking whether you're using someone's lost or stolen passport.

A gaping, if little-known, loophole in international aviation security came into broader

view Sunday when the international police agency Interpol said its computer systems had contained information on the theft of two passports that were used to board an ill-fated Malaysia Airlines flight - but no national authorities had checked the database.

Largely unheeded, Interpol has long sounded the alarm that growing international travel has underpinned a new market for identity theft and bogus passports have lured many people: Illegal immigrants, terrorists, drug runners, pretty much anyone looking to travel unnoticed.

It's not known whether stolen passports had anything to do with Saturday's disappearance of the Boeing 777 bound from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to Beijing with 239 people on board. But such oversights aren't new - and Interpol hopes national authorities will "learn from the tragedy."

More than 1 billion times last year, travelers boarded planes without their passports being checked against Interpol's database of 40 million stolen or lost travel documents, the Lyon-based police body said. Interpol Secretary General Ronald K. Noble said in a statement Sunday that it has long asked why



A Malaysian police officer checks passengers' identification documents at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang, Malaysia, Sunday, March 9, 2014. AP

countries would "wait for a tragedy to put prudent security measures in place at borders and boarding gates."

Officials cite recent instances of use of stolen travel documents: A war crimes suspect who tried to attend a conference in Congo, but was instead arrested; the killer of the Serbian prime minister crossed 27 borders on a missing passport before he was caught; Samantha Lewthwaite, the former

wife of one of the suicide bombers in the 2005 attack on London's transit system, escaped capture when she produced a fraudulently obtained South African passport.

Sometimes, authorities are outmatched: Ticket-buying regulations and border control techniques vary from country to country, and an Interpol official says there's no one-size-fits-all explanation why some countries don't use its data-

base systematically.

For the last decade, Interpol has stocked and shared information on stolen or lost passports in ways few international agencies can: it has 190 member countries. And air security is increasingly international work: the Malaysia flight had mostly Chinese and Malaysian passengers, but Americans, Australians, French, Indians Indonesians and Ukrainians too.

Complaints won't avert colleague's frequent errors

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By **MARIE G. MCINTYRE**
McClatchy-Tribune News Service



Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of *Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at <http://www.yourofficecoach.com>, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

QUESTION: I have been struggling for months to keep up with a steadily increasing workload. My manager recognized the problem and assigned a co-worker to help, but this is doing more harm than good. Although "Rachel" completes tasks very quickly, she tends to make a lot of errors.

Now, in addition to doing my own work, I have to spend time fixing Rachel's mistakes. I don't want to sound unappreciative, but her assistance has actually made my job more difficult. Whenever I mention this to my boss, he immediately defends Rachel. What should I do?

ANSWER: If you can choose what to delegate to your error-prone colleague, you might try giving her tasks which are simpler or more familiar. But if you have no choice about her assignment, perhaps you should rethink the way you handle her mistakes.

As long as you continue to fix her blunders, Rachel will never learn to do things properly. Completing the work yourself only fosters her incompetence, so consider returning the errors to her for correction. While this may take more time initially, it will help Rachel become a more useful assistant.

A third possibility is to revise the way you present this issue to your boss. Based on his defensive reaction, I assume you have been complaining about Rachel's ineptitude, but a better strategy is to request his help in solving a business problem.

To illustrate the difference, here's what complaining sounds like: "Rachel makes so many mistakes that she's really no help at all. She's fast, but she's careless, so working with her only makes my job more difficult."

This is a more effective approach: "I really appreciate your asking Rachel to help out with my heavy workload. My only concern is that her lack of experience limits her ability to do these tasks correctly. Since working with her hasn't saved any time, I'd like to discuss some other possible solutions."

Managers hate dealing with employee squabbles, so they often react badly to gripes about co-workers. A businesslike request for assistance will usually elicit a more helpful response.

Q: My employees never remember anything I say. Despite frequent reminders, they continue to ignore standard procedures and well-established rules. When I point out these infractions, they always plead ignorance, even though they've been told many times.

I have tried numerous methods for improving communication, but nothing seems to work. Verbal instructions are promptly forgotten, and written guidelines are always overlooked. We work in health care, so procedures are important. How do I get these people to listen?

A: Your solutions aren't working because you've defined the problem incorrectly. The real issue here is compliance, not communication. These wayward folks continue to ignore you because you have never imposed any consequences for disregarding rules.

Instead of endlessly repeating familiar expectations, you must clearly describe what will happen the next time someone violates a critical procedure. When one of your employees conveniently "forgets," you should immediately impose the promised consequence. If you use this approach consistently, I guarantee that memories will improve.

No consensus on how to notify data breach victims

WASHINGTON (AP)—The data breach at Target Corp. that exposed millions of credit card numbers has focused attention on the patchwork of state consumer notification laws and renewed a push for a single national standard.

Most states have laws that require retailers to disclose data breaches, but the laws vary wildly. Consumers in one state might learn immediately that their personal information had been exposed, but that might not happen in another state, and notification requirements for businesses depend on where their customers are located. Attorney General Eric Holder has joined the call for a nationwide notification standard, but divisions persist, making a consensus questionable this year.

"We're stuck with the state-by-state approach unless some compromise gets done at the federal level," said Peter Swire, a privacy expert at Georgia Tech and a former White House privacy official.

Despite general agreement on the value of a national standard, there are obstacles to a straightforward compromise:

- Consumer groups don't want to weaken existing protections in states with the strongest laws.
- Retailers want laws that are

less burdensome to comply with and say too much notification could cause consumers to tune out the problem.

■ Congress is looking at different proposals for how any federal standard should be enforced and what the threshold should be before notification requirements kick in.

The issue gained fresh ur-

gency as part of a larger security debate after data breaches involving retailers Neiman Marcus and Target. Target, the nation's second-largest retail discounter, has said 40 million credit and debit card accounts were exposed between Nov. 27 and Dec. 15.

The company went public with the breach on Dec.

19, several days after it said it learned of the problem and soon after the news began leaking online. Since then, sales, profit and stock prices have dropped, the company's chief information officer has resigned and banks and retailers are facing continued scrutiny about what more can be done to protect consumer data.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Americans riding public transit in record numbers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Americans are boarding public buses, trains and subways in greater numbers than any time since the suburbs began booming. Nearly 10.7 billion trips in 2013, to be precise—the highest total since 1956. The new numbers come from the American Public Transportation Association. Transit ridership has now fully recovered from a dip caused by the Great Recession. With services restored following economy-driven cutbacks, the numbers appear set to continue what had been a steady increase. Expanding bus and train networks help spur the growth, as does the nation's urban shift. The sprawling city of Houston had a large ridership gain. So did Los Angeles, Seattle, Miami, Denver and San Diego.

MasterCard, Visa plan group focused on security

WASHINGTON (AP)—Visa and MasterCard want banks and retailers to work together on securing customer data and stop blaming each other after a massive data breach during the holiday season. The two payment networks announced

Friday that they are bringing together large and small banks, credit unions, retailers, makers of card processing equipment and industry trade groups in a group that aims to strengthen the U.S. payment system for credit and debit cards. The data breaches affecting Target Corp., the No. 2 U.S. discounter, and luxury retailer Neiman Marcus have shaken consumers' confidence.

Japan has record deficit, lowers growth estimate

TOKYO (AP)—Japan racked up a record current account deficit in January, and lowered its growth estimate for the October-December quarter Monday in the latest sign of hardships for the world's third-largest economy. Japan's current account deficit totaled 1.589 trillion yen (\$15 billion), the biggest for January since comparable records began in 1985, according to the Finance Ministry. The Cabinet Office revised its real gross domestic product growth to an annual pace of 0.7 percent, lower than its initial 1.0 percent. It said that both private and public demand was lower than it had estimated last month, including lower levels for private consumption and public investment.

Nation

Can GOP neutralize immigration as election issue?

AURORA, Colo. (AP)—If the apparent slow death of immigration legislation has any political repercussions this year, they probably will be felt in the subdivisions, shopping centers and ethnic eateries wrapped around Denver's southern end.

U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman represents this fast-changing district.

He's among a few vulnerable Republican members in line to be targeted by immigrant rights advocates if the House doesn't pass an immigration bill before the November election that would offer legal status to millions of people who entered the U.S. illegally or overstayed their visas.

The issue is no easy solution for Democrats needing to gain 17 seats to win back the House majority. Democratic campaign officials are focusing on about two dozen GOP-held seats where immigration could be a factor, but they rank only nine in the top tier of possible pickups.

Immigration advocates acknowledge their impact on House races this year is limited. Most Republicans hold safe seats in districts with relatively low numbers of immigrants. Coffman is one of the most vulnerable incumbents, but the three-term lawmaker's shift on the issue illustrates the difficul-



In this Aug. 28, 2013 file photo, Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., left, speaks, as fellow members of congress, Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., center, and Rep. Cory Gardner, R-Colo. listen during a congressional lunch and panel discussion sponsored by the Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry, in Denver.

ties Democrats may have.

Coffman was elected in 2008 to succeed immigration firebrand Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo. Coffman endorsed Tancredo in the 2010 governor's

race, which he lost, and initially backed measures such as barring U.S. citizenship to children whose parents were in the country without legal permission. Coffman also supported

allowing English-only ballots in districts with large immigrant populations.

But his district was redrawn to include immigrant-heavy Aurora. After seeing fast-growing

Hispanic and Asian populations overwhelmingly back Democrats in 2012, Coffman embraced citizenship for people

brought to the U.S. illegally as children. He announced his new position in Spanish.

Coffman stopped short of backing a broader proposal to legalize more of the people in the country illegally, but he was one of the few House Republicans at a recent party meeting in Maryland to urge his colleagues to pursue an immigration bill.

Seeing major divisions within the GOP and saying that Republicans don't trust President Barack Obama to enforce the law, House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said last month that immigration legislation is unlikely to reach the House floor until after the election.

"The fact that immigration reform has disappeared kind of takes it off the table," said Floyd Ciruli, a nonpartisan Denver-based pollster. Coffman "is doing everything he can to make it a less salient issue," Ciruli said.

Obama took Coffman's district by 5 percentage points in 2012, while Coffman by only 2 points. One-fifth of the congressman's constituents are Hispanic, 10 percent are black, and political registration is evenly divided among Democrats, Republicans and independents.

Family of Texas man on flight comforted by faith

By **JOHN L. MONE**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KELLER, Texas (AP)—The brothers of a North Texas man who was aboard the Malaysia Airlines flight that went missing over the South China Sea said Sunday their family is leaning on faith and holding out hope for good news about the man they last saw about a week ago.

Philip Wood, an IBM executive who had been working in Beijing over the past two years, had recently returned home from Asia before his next assignment in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Wood came back to Texas to visit his family before relocat-

ing to the Malaysian capital, his brother, James Wood said.

The Saturday flight was supposed to be his final one to China's capital. James Wood told the Associated Press during an interview at the family's home in the Dallas suburb of Keller, Texas, that Philip Wood was supposed to make the final arrangements there for his relocation to Malaysia.

"This was going to be his last trip to Beijing. It just happened to be this one," James Wood said.

"There is a shock, a very surreal moment in your life," Wood added.

"Last Sunday, we were all having breakfast together. And

now, you can't," he said during a phone interview earlier in the day, as the family got ready to attend church. Their faith, he said, is what's helping the family through this trying time.

"My brother, our family, we are Christians. Christ above else is what's keeping us together," he said.

Philip Wood, 50, was one of three Americans who were aboard the Boeing 777 when it lost contact with air traffic control as it was cruising on its way from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 227 passengers and 12 crew members. It isn't known with whom the other two Americans, Nicole Meng, 4, and Yan

Zhang, 2, were traveling.

James Wood described his brother, a technical storage executive at IBM Malaysia, as an "outgoing, gregarious, friendly, loving man" who was excited about moving to Malaysia.

"He loved to travel while he was over there. His job gave him the opportunity to do that," James Wood said.

James Wood said that his brother is divorced and that one of his sons attends Texas A&M University and that another is an alumnus of that university.

He also pointed out that, along with his brother, members of hundreds of other families were aboard Flight MH370.

Police seek security balance for Boston Marathon

By **DENISE LAVOIE**
AP LEGAL AFFAIRS WRITER

BOSTON (AP)—The ladies of Wellesley College will still be allowed to plant kisses on passing runners and crowds will still flock to the finish line at the 118th Boston Marathon.

But a year after deadly twin explosions turned the race's festive final dash into a scene of devastation, police and organizers of the world's oldest annual marathon find themselves balancing security with its traditionally festive atmosphere.

"We want this event to be what it always has been, and that's a special day for the city, the best marathon in the world," said Boston Police Commissioner William Evans. "We don't want to change that."

But the bombing has affected nearly every detail of planning for the April 21 race as police work to beef up security along the 26.2-mile course. Participants who favor flamboyant costumes will have to tone it down, and unregistered "bandit" runners will no longer be permitted. Runners

won't be allowed to stow personal items in a backpack but instead will be provided with clear plastic bags to hold a change of clothes that will be bused to the finish line.

And spectators will encounter security checkpoints along with hundreds more officers, bomb-sniffing dogs and other security measures that haven't yet been disclosed. Public safety officials are expected to release more details Monday.

"We are going to have a lot of security, but we want to do it more low-key so we don't

alarm people who might want to come," Evans said.

Last year, authorities say two brothers built bombs out of pressure cookers, carried them to the finish line in backpacks and set them off. The bombs tore into the crowd, killing three people and injuring more than 260.

This year, spectators are being strongly discouraged from bringing backpacks, coolers, quilts and other bulky items.

"People have to realize that if they are going to come, they are going to be subjected to the possibility of searches," Evans said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Man convicted of slaying 7 awarded nearly \$500K

CHICAGO (AP)—A former handyman serving life in prison for the 1993 murder of seven people at a suburban Chicago restaurant has been awarded nearly a half-million dollars in a civil lawsuit in which he alleged a jail guard punched him in the face. Victims' relatives Sunday criticized jurors' decision for James Degorski, who, with an accomplice, shot and stabbed two restaurant owners and five workers at Brown's Chicken and Pasta during a botched robbery. Their bodies were found in a walk-in cooler and freezer. Degorski, now 41, accused a Cook County Jail guard of punching him and breaking his cheekbone and eye socket in 2002—just after Degorski's arrest in what had been one of the most notorious, unsolved murder cases in Illinois history.

Skydiver, pilot treated after midair accident

MULBERRY, Fla. (AP)—A plane became entangled in the strings of a skydiver's parachute, sending both crashing into the ground near Tampa, Fla., with both the pilot and jumper hospitalized with minor injuries. Polk County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Carrie Eleazer says 87-year-old pilot Shannon Trembley was doing takeoff and landing maneuvers Saturday in his Cessna at the South Lakeland Airport in Mulberry. On his third landing pass, the wing of his plane became entangled in the strings of 49-year-old Gainesville skydiver John Frost's parachute about 75 feet above the ground.

NYC guard-inmate sex scandal triggers jail review

NEW YORK (AP)—Jail guard Nancy Gonzalez gained notoriety by conceiving a baby behind bars with a cop killer. But her story of sexual misconduct at a federal lockup in Brooklyn doesn't end there. Gonzalez claims she had sex with at least eight co-workers, including two supervisors, while on duty at the Metropolitan Detention Center in less than two years. She also admitted having sex with a second inmate. The allegations of a broader, behind-the-scenes sex scandal that created potential security risks are contained in a document Gonzalez's attorneys prepared before she was sentenced last month to a year in prison. She pleaded guilty to having illegal sexual contact with inmate Ronell Wilson, who had been convicted in 2006 in the point-blank shooting of two undercover police officers.

Asia

Vietnam says cannot find object from missing jet

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Vietnamese searchers on ships worked throughout the night but could not find a rectangle object spotted Sunday afternoon that was thought to be one of the doors of a Malaysia Airlines passenger jet that went missing more than two days ago.

Doan Huu Gia, the chief of Vietnam's search and rescue coordination center, said Monday that four planes and seven ships from Vietnam were searching for the object but nothing had been found.

The Boeing 777 went missing early Saturday morning on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board.

The plane lost contact with ground controllers somewhere between Malaysia and Vietnam, and searchers in a low-flying plane spotted an object that appeared to be one of the plane's doors, the state-run Thanh Nien newspaper said, citing the deputy chief of staff of Vietnam's army, Lt. Gen. Vo Van Tuan.

The jetliner apparently fell from the sky at cruising altitude in fine weather, and the pilots were either unable or had no time to send a distress signal, adding to the mystery over the final minutes of the flight.

There are also questions over how two passengers managed to board the ill-fated aircraft using stolen passports.

Interpol confirmed it knew about the stolen passports but said no authorities checked its vast databases on stolen documents before the Boeing jetliner departed Saturday.

Warning "only a handful of countries" routinely make such checks, Interpol secretary general Ronald Noble chided



In this photo released by Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, a patrol vessel of Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency searches for the missing Malaysia Airlines plane off Tok Bali Beach in Kelantan, Malaysia, Sunday, March 9, 2014.

authorities for "waiting for a tragedy to put prudent security measures in place at borders and boarding gates."

On Saturday, the foreign ministries in Italy and Austria said the names of two citizens listed on the flight's manifest matched the names on two passports reported stolen in Thailand.

"I can confirm that we have the visuals of these two people on CCTV," Malaysian Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said at a news conference late Sunday, adding that the footage was being examined. "We have intelligence agencies, both local and international, on board."

The thefts of the two passports - one belonging to Austrian Christian Kozel and the other to Luigi Maraldi of Italy - were entered into Interpol's database after they were stolen in Thai-

land in 2012 and last year, the police body said.

Electronic booking records show that one-way tickets with those names were issued Thursday from a travel agency in the

beach resort of Pattaya in eastern Thailand. A person who answered the phone at the agency said she could not comment.

But no authorities in Malaysia or elsewhere checked the

Jetliner missing



1. Flight MH370, a Boeing 777-200, leaves Malaysia

• Plane was supposed to fly over Vietnam; contact lost at 2:40 a.m. local time

• Chinese officials say the plane dropped from radar while in Vietnamese airspace

2. Chinese news agency, citing Vietnamese media, reports a signal was detected about 135 mi. (220 km) southwest of Ca Mau, Vietnam

Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Flight Aware, Xinhua news agency, Reuters
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passports against the database of 40 million stolen or lost travel documents before the Malaysian Airlines plane took off.

Afghan VP, ex-Northern alliance commander, dies

KABUL, Afghanistan

(AP)—Afghanistan's influential Vice President Mohammad Qasim Fahim, a leading commander in the alliance that fought the Taliban who was later accused with other warlords of targeting civilian areas during the country's civil war, died Sunday. He was 57.

Fahim was an ethnic Tajik who was the top deputy of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the charismatic Northern Alliance commander who was killed in an al-Qaida suicide bombing two days before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. He died a month before Afghans go to the polls to choose a new president to replace Hamid Karzai, who

is barred from seeking a third consecutive term.

Fahim's death could bring some sympathy votes to presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah, who was also a member of the Northern Alliance and a friend. But it is not expected to cause any dramatic ripples in either the campaign or the polling.

Karzai's office said Fahim - who held the rank of field marshal and had survived several assassination attempts, most recently in 2009 in northern Afghanistan - died of natural

causes in Kabul. The government declared three days of mourning beginning Monday, and Karzai and other dignitaries rushed to Fahim's house in Kabul to pay their respects.

His longtime friend and Afghanistan's ambassador to Spain, Masood Khalili, said Fahim "was not feeling good. He had diabetes. He had had two heart operations and three times he had gone to Germany for check-ups." Khalili was badly wounded in the same suicide bombing that killed Massoud.



Fahim

Fahim served as defense minister in Karzai's first administration and most recently was the first of two vice presidents. But he was best remembered as a former warlord who fought against the Soviets when they occupied the country and for taking part in the bitter internecine fighting that marked the early 1990s. He went on to battle alongside Massoud against the Taliban.

In a televised address to the nation, Karzai called Fahim his close friend and brother.

"No one can replace him. It is a loss for all of us," Karzai said. "Fahim was part of every historic decision made for the future of Afghanistan."

NKorea: Not a single vote cast against Kim Jong Un

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—With no one else on the ballot, state media reported Monday that supreme leader Kim Jong Un was not only elected to the highest legislative body in North Korea, he won with the unanimous approval of his district, which had 100 percent turnout.

North Koreans went to the polls on Sunday to approve the new roster of deputies for the Supreme People's Assembly, the country's legislature. The vote, more a political ritual than an election by Western stan-

dards, is generally held once every five years.

Though results for the other seats in the assembly had not yet been announced, North Korea's media quickly reported Kim had won in his district - located on the symbolic Mount Paekdu - without a single dissenting ballot.

In the previous elections, 687 deputies were chosen. This is first time the election had been held since Kim inherited power after the death of his father, Kim Jong Il, in 2011.

"This is an expression of all the service personnel and peo-

ple's absolute support and profound trust in supreme leader Kim Jong Un as they single-mindedly remain loyal to him," the state-run Korean Central News Agency said.

Voters in the election have no choice who to vote for - there is only one candidate's name on the ballot for each district. Instead, they have the choice of voting yes or no, and according to official accounts virtually all choose yes. North Korea also typically puts turnout nationwide at over 99 percent.

Analysts will be closely

watching to see if the deputies this time around reflect a generational change as Kim looks to solidify his power and replace older cadres with younger, more loyal ones.

The Supreme People's Assembly usually meets only rarely, often only once a year. In practice it has little power and when it is not in session, its work is done by a smaller and more powerful body called the Presidium.

The new parliament was expected to meet next month. No date has been officially announced.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Nepal steps up security to stop Tibetan protests

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Hundreds of riot police stepped up security Monday near the Chinese embassy, visa office and areas in Nepalese capital where Tibetan refugees live to stop any protests to mark the anniversary of a failed 1959 uprising against Chinese rule in Tibet. Police spokesman Ganesh K.C. said the security was stepped up to stop any possible anti-China protests in Katmandu and attempts by the Tibetan refugees to self-immolate to protest Chinese rule over their homeland. Police officers in riot gear guarded all the roads leading to the Chinese embassy and its visa office in the center of Katmandu. Most of the recent protests have centered near the visa office.

Weekend violence kills 11 civilians in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A roadside bomb ripped through a car in southern Afghanistan, the deadliest of a series of weekend attacks that killed 11 civilians, officials said Sunday. Seven people, including three women and two children, were killed and eight others wounded when the car was hit while traveling in the volatile Helmand province, according to a statement by the provincial governor's office. It said the car was one of two carrying civilians between the districts of Musa Qala and Nawzad. It hit the bomb in Musa Qala. The statement said two other civilians were killed Saturday in a bombing in the Kajaki district, providing no other details. Insurgents also attacked a checkpoint elsewhere in the district, killing an Afghan policeman, it said.

World

Putin defends separatist drive in Crimea as legal

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday defended the separatist drive in the disputed Crimean Peninsula as in keeping with international law, but Ukraine's prime minister vowed not to relinquish "a single centimeter" of his country's territory.

Over the weekend, the Kremlin beefed up its military presence in Crimea, a part of Ukraine since 1954, and pro-Russia forces keep pushing for a vote in favor of reunification with Moscow in a referendum the local parliament has scheduled for next Sunday.

President Barack Obama has warned that the March 16 vote would violate international law. But in Moscow, Putin made it clear that he supports the referendum in phone calls with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Minister David Cameron.

"The steps taken by the legitimate leadership of Crimea are based on the norms of international law and aim to ensure the legal interests of the population of the peninsula," said Putin, according to the Kremlin.

Following an extraordinary Sunday meeting of the Ukrainian government, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk announced that he will meet with Obama in Washington on Wednesday on a "resolution of the situation in Ukraine," the Interfax news agency reported. The White House confirmed the meeting.

"Our country and our people are facing the biggest challenges in the history of modern independent Ukraine," the prime



Pro Russia protestors work to remove a Ukrainian flag from a flagpole which they took from the regional governance Security Service of Ukraine building during a rally in Donetsk, Ukraine, Sunday, March 9, 2014.

minister said earlier in the day. "Will we be able to deal with these challenges? There should only be one answer to this question and that is: yes."

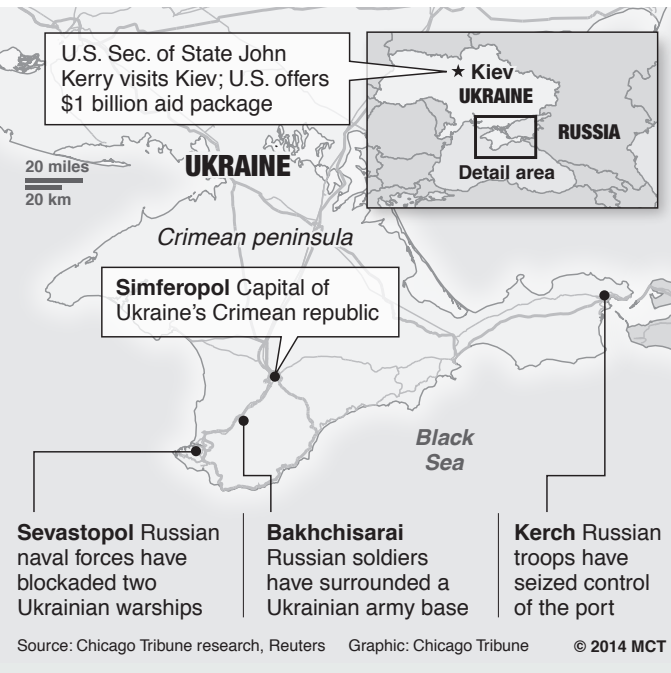
In an emotional climate of crisis, Ukraine on Sunday solemnly commemorated the 200th anniversary of the birth of its greatest poet, Taras Shevchenko, a son of peasant

serfs who is a national hero and is considered the father of modern Ukrainian literature.

"This is our land," Yatsenyuk told a crowd gathered at the Kiev statue to Shevchenko. "Our fathers and grandfathers have spilled their blood for this land. And we won't budge a single centimeter from Ukrainian land. Let Russia and its

In control of Crimea

Ukraine's interim government say 16,000 Russian troops are now deployed across Crimea, surrounding Ukrainian army bases and seizing a Ukrainian port city. President Vladimir Putin says Russia has the right to "take all measures" in Ukraine.



president know this."

"We're one country, one family and we're here together with our kobzar (bard) Taras," said acting President Oleksandr Turchynov.

Later, Ukrainians in the tens of thousands massed in the Kiev's center for a multi-faith prayer meeting to display unity and honor Shevchenko. One of the speakers, former imprisoned Russian tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, almost burst into tears as he implored the crowd to believe not all Russians support their country's recent actions in Ukraine.

"I want you to know there is a completely different Russia," Khodorkovsky said.

In the eastern city of Luhansk, however, people who gathered in a square to celebrate Shevchenko's birthday were attacked by pro-Russia protesters, and some were beaten up, local media reports said.

Chanting "Russia! Russia!" the demonstrators then broke through a police barricade and took over the local government building, where they raised the Russian flag and demanded a citywide referendum on joining Russia, Channel 5 and other local media reported.

But it's Crimea, a strategic peninsula in the Black Sea, that has become the chief flash-point in the battle for Ukraine, where three months of protests sparked by President Victor Yanukovich's decision to ditch a significant treaty with the 28-nation European Union after strong pressure from Russia led to his downfall.

Syrian rebels release nuns held since December

MASNA, Lebanon (AP)—Rebels in Syria freed more than a dozen Greek Orthodox nuns on Monday, ending their four-month captivity in exchange for Syrian authorities releasing dozens of female prisoners.

The release of the nuns and their helpers, 16 women in all, is a rare successful prisoner exchange deal between Syrian government authorities and the rebels seeking to overthrow the rule of President Bashar Assad.

But it is unlikely to soothe the fears of many Syrian Chris-

tians that their ancient minority is in danger should rebels come to power.

A convoy of 30 cars delivered the nuns to the Syrian town of Jdeidet Yabous, which lies close to the Lebanese border. A photograph published on Lebanon's official news site showed soldiers assisting a middle-aged nun out a vehicle.

"We arrived late, and we arrived tired," said Mother Superior Pelagia Sayaf, the head of the Maaloula convent.

Behind her, women ulu-

lated in celebration on footage broadcast on Syrian television. They were then ushered into an honorary guest room by Syrian officials.

Approximately 150 female prisoners are to be released in exchange for the nuns' freedom, said the head of Lebanon's General Security agency, Gen. Abbas Ibrahim, who oversaw the deal, speaking to Syrian television.

Ibrahim said the deal nearly collapsed at the last minute after rebels demanded more prisoners be released.

Syrian rebels, including members of the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front, seized the 13 nuns and their three helpers from the Mar Takla convent when fighters overran the Christian village of Maaloula, north of Damascus, in December.

Sayaf said the nuns were treated well, although they did not feel comfortable wearing their crosses and crucifixes.

The nuns, who are believed to be mostly Syrian and Lebanese, worked in the convent's orphanage.

Libya says its forces now near oil tanker

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP)—Libyan government forces and loyal militia fighters besieged a North Korea-flagged tanker Sunday that a rival militia hoped to use to export oil in defiance of central authorities, officials said.

Al-Habib al-Amin, the country's culture minister and a top aide to Libya's prime minister, told reporters in a televised news conference that government forces including navy vessels were deployed to al-Sidra port to stop the tanker.

"It's final and decisive. Any attempt (by the tanker) to move, it will be turned into scrap," al-Amin said.

The Libya Revolutionary Operation Room, an umbrella group of militias groups that answer to the interim parliament, said in a statement on its official Facebook page that the tanker is at the port and "couldn't leave because

our hero revolutionaries are besieging it and preventing it from leaving."

"In case it doesn't surrender, the tanker will be shelled completely," the statement said. In a second note, the operation room said that 22 fishing vessels mounted with mortar and rocket launchers are surrounding the tanker.

Al-Sidra is one of the biggest ports in the country and has been under militia control since the summer, slowing the country's oil output—once estimated at 1.6 million barrels a day—to a trickle.

The seizure of the terminals and attempted oil sales show Libya's security and economic woes which have piled up over the past two years since the toppling of dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

Gadhafi's ouster left the country without a functioning government, as well as weak military and police forces.

Razor thin margin in El Salvador presidential vote

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—El Salvador's too-close-to-call presidential runoff election has raised competing claims of victory from a former fighter for leftist guerrillas and the once long-ruling conservative party that fought a civil war from 1980 to 1992.

Norman Quijano, the candidate of the conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance, or ARENA, said his party was

on "a war footing" and vowed "to fight with our lives, if necessary" to defend what he claimed was his victory.

But preliminary returns from nearly all polling stations showed him a few thousand votes behind Salvador Sanchez Ceren, the leftist candidate of the now governing Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, or FMLN. The margin of just under 7,000 votes was just

over 0.2 percent of the approximately 3 million ballots cast.

Sanchez Ceren also claimed to have won.

"The men and women of El Salvador are the ones who decide, and if you don't accept the result, you are violating the will of the people," Sanchez Ceren said. "I say to my adversary, to his party, that my administration will welcome them with open arms, so that together we

can build a new country."

It was a surprising result, considering that opinion polls in the weeks leading up to the election had put Quijano, the former mayor of San Salvador, 10 to 18 percentage points behind Sanchez Ceren.

The president of El Salvador's Supreme Electoral Tribunal, Eugenio Chicas, said the race was "extremely tight" and said neither candidate could claim victory.

Focus

Behind jet's passenger list is rich human tapestry

By ROD McGUIRK
and STEPHEN WRIGHT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BANGKOK (AP)—Numbered 1 to 227, the passenger manifest for the missing Malaysia Airlines jet is an outwardly unremarkable document.

But behind the columns of capitalized names, nationalities and ages are 227 unique stories, part of a rich human tapestry that assembles every time a flight departs. There were middle-aged Australians with wanderlust, an acclaimed Chinese calligrapher, a young Indonesian man heading to begin a new career, and two people traveling on stolen passports.

More than a day and a half has passed since the Boeing 777 disappeared from radar screens in the first hour of a six-hour flight from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to Beijing. From France to Australia and China, families and friends are enduring an agonizing wait for news about Flight MH370.

The flight had a crew of 12, all from Malaysia, a melting pot nation of ethnic Malays, Chinese and Indians. Passengers on the popular business and tourist route were mostly from China and Malaysia, along with smatterings of people from other corners of the world: Americans, Australians, Indians, French, Indonesians, Ukrainians and other nationalities.

Some traveled alone, some in groups. They were young sweethearts and wrinkled older couples. Some had business in mind, others thought of art. Seventy-four years separates the youngest, 2-year-old Moheng Wang, and the oldest, 76-year-old Rusheng Liu.

"I can only pray for a miracle," said Daniel Liao, the organizer of a calligraphic and painting exhibition in Malaysia attended by acclaimed Chinese calligrapher Meng Gaosheng, who boarded the flight with 18 other artists plus six family members and four staff.

"I feel very sad. Even though I knew them for a short time, they have become my friends," Liao said.

Also traveling as a group were eight Chinese and 12 Malaysian employees of Austin, Texas, semiconductor company Freescale, which said it was assembling "around-the-clock support" for their families.

Each day more than 80,000 flights take off and land around the world without incident. For seasoned Australian travelers Robert Lawton, 58, and his wife, Catherine, 54, the seemingly routine takeoff of flight MH370 was the beginning of another adventure.

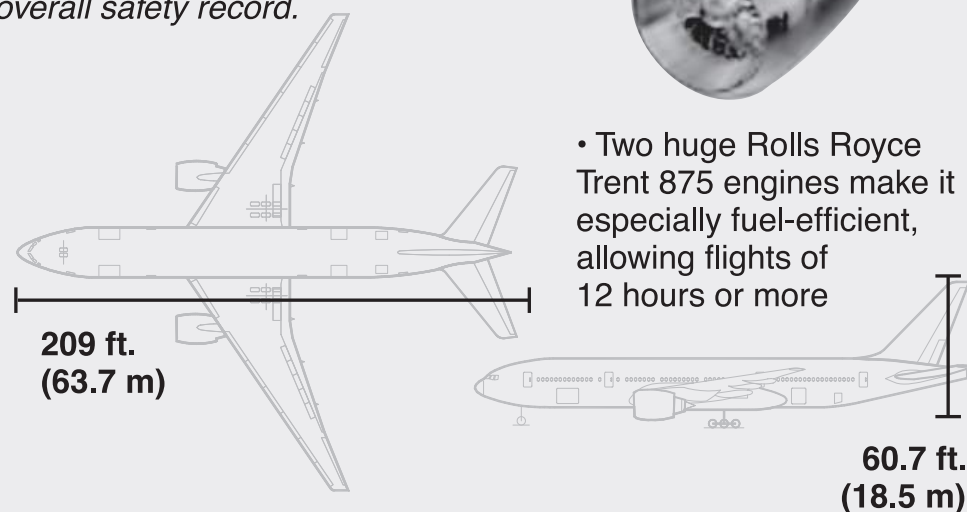
"They mentioned in passing they were going on another big trip and they were really excited," Caroline Daintith, a neighbor, told Australian Broadcasting Corp. television of the couple described as doting grandparents.

Sharing their adventure was another 50-something Australian couple, Rodney and Mary Burrows. Neighbor Don Stokes said the trip was intended as the beginning of the "next step in their life."

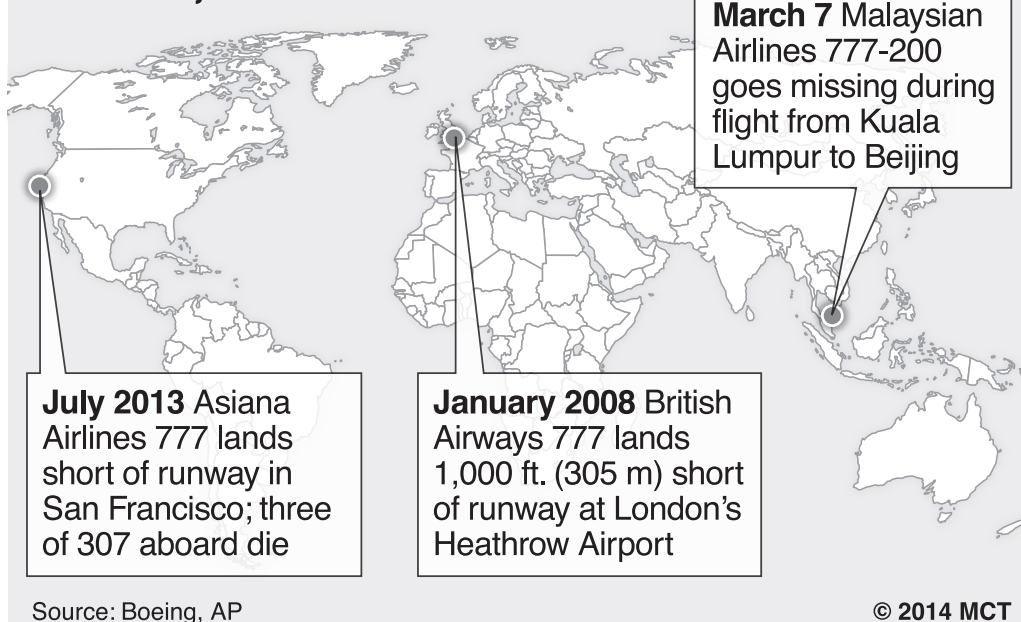
Among the family groups on board were teenage sweethearts Hadrien Watrelos, 17, and Zhao Yan, 18, students at a French school in Beijing who were returning from the Malaysian leg of a two-week holiday along with Hadrien's mother

Boeing 777

A Boeing 777-200 can carry between 246 to 300 passengers. Until now, it has had a very good overall safety record.



Until now, few accidents



Source: Boeing, AP

© 2014 MCT

and younger sister.

In December, Zhao changed her Facebook profile photo to one of her and Hadrien. He had commented: "Je t'aime," followed by a heart, and she had "liked" his comment.

Some boarded the plane with more serious purposes in mind.

Colleagues of Chandrika Sharma said the 50-year-old director of the Chennai chapter of an organization that works with fishermen was on her way from the southern Indian city to Mongolia for a Food and Agriculture Organization conference.

"There must still be hope," said a colleague, Venogupal, who like many in India goes by one name.

He seemed, however, to be bracing for the worst. "She was friendly and very loveable, very industrious and astute. We will miss her."

For 24-year-old Firman Chandra Siregar from Medan, Indonesia, the flight was a new chapter. In Beijing, he was to start a three-year contract with Schlumberger, an oilfield services company.

Dozens of relatives and neighbors gathered at his family's home, some tearful, praying or watching news of the search and rescue operation. Like Sharma's colleagues, they were forced

to let hope ebb away.

A team from the Indonesian police's Disaster Victim Identification unit collected DNA samples and medical records from Firman's family and photographed pictures of Firman that hung on the walls of the family home.

The motivation of some on board is murky. Two passengers were traveling with stolen EU passports - fueling speculation that the plane's disappearance was not an accident.

Yet the documents are just two of at least 39 million lost and stolen passports around the world. Last year, there were more than 29.3 million flights worldwide. By chance, many of those flights would have a passenger traveling on a stolen passport. They may be criminals, people seeking a better life, or something else.

Also by chance: Liu Hongwei was not on Flight MH370.

The Beijing-based head of an investment company and friend of the calligrapher Meng said that he was invited to the exhibition and cultural exchange in Malaysia as a sponsor, but that business commitments kept him from going.

"That could have been me on that plane," he said. "We're all very worried."

A look at the world's deadliest air disasters

A Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 disappeared from air traffic control screens over waters between Malaysia and Vietnam early Saturday morning, leaving the fates of the 239 people aboard in doubt. A look at some of the world's deadliest air disasters:

June 3, 2012: Dana Air MD-83 jet crashes into residential area of Nigeria's largest city, Lagos, killing all 153 people aboard.

April 20, 2012: Bhoja Air Boeing 737 crashes in wheat fields near Islamabad, Pakistan while trying to land during thunder storm, killing 127 people.

Jan 9, 2011: Iran Air Boeing 727 breaks to pieces on impact in northwestern Iran. 77 dead.

May 12, 2010: Afriqiyah Airways plane en route to Tripoli, Libya, from Johannesburg, South Africa, crashes into the desert less than a mile from the runway, killing 103 people.

April 10, 2010: The plane of Polish President Lech Kaczynski crashes outside the western Russian city of Smolensk, killing all 96 aboard.

June 30, 2009: Yemenia Airbus 310 en route to the Comoros Islands crashes into the Indian Ocean with 153 people on board.

June 1, 2009: Air France Airbus A330 runs into thunderstorms and crashes into Atlantic Ocean en route from Rio de Janeiro to Paris, killing 228 people on board.

Feb. 19, 2003: Iranian Revolutionary Guard military plane crashes into a mountain. 275 dead.

May 25, 2002: China Airlines Boeing 747 breaks apart midair and crashes into the Taiwan Strait. 225 dead.

Nov. 12, 2001: American Airlines Airbus A300 crashes after takeoff from JFK Airport into the New York City borough of Queens. 265 dead, including people on the ground.

Oct. 31, 1999: EgyptAir Boeing 767 crashes off Nantucket; the NTSB blames actions by the co-pilot. 217 dead.

Sept. 2, 1998: Swissair MD-11 crashes off Nova Scotia. 229 dead.

Feb. 16, 1998: China Airlines Airbus A300 crashes on landing at airport in Taipei, Taiwan. 203 dead.

Sept. 26, 1997: Garuda Indonesia Airbus A300 crashes near airport in Medan, Indonesia. 234 dead.

Aug. 6, 1997: Korean Air Boeing 747-300 crashes on landing in Guam. 228 dead.

Nov. 12, 1996: Saudi Boeing 747 collides with Kazakh cargo plane near New Delhi. 349 dead.

July 17, 1996: TWA Boeing 747 explodes and crashes into the Atlantic off Long Island, New York. 230 dead.

April 26, 1994: China Airlines Airbus A300 crashes on landing at Nagoya Airport in Japan. 264 dead.

Dec. 12, 1985: Arrow Air DC-8 crashes after takeoff from Newfoundland, Canada. 256 dead.

Aug. 12, 1985: Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 crashes into a mountainside after losing part of its tail fin. 520 dead in the world's worst single-plane disaster.

Aug. 19, 1980: Saudi Tristar makes emergency landing in Riyadh and bursts into flames. 301 dead.

Nov. 28, 1979: Air New Zealand DC-10 crashes into Antarctica's Mt. Erebus during sightseeing flight over the icy wilderness. 257 dead.

May 25, 1979: American Airlines DC-10 crashes after takeoff from Chicago's O'Hare Airport. 275 dead.

Jan. 1, 1978: Air India 747 crashes into the ocean after takeoff from Mumbai. 213 dead.

March 27, 1977: KLM 474, Pan American 747 collide on runway in Tenerife, Canary Islands. 583 dead in world's worst airline disaster.

Source: World Almanac, Associated Press.

Overdrive

Kia K900 piles on the luxury



The 2015 Kia K900 is South Korea's version of the Westminster Kennel Club dog show. It's a display of automotive breeding that takes the most expensive luxury sedan from its Hyundai sister company, the Equus, and tweaks it for an even more value-oriented buyer.

By SUSAN CARPENTER
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

The 2015 Kia K900 is South Korea's version of the Westminster Kennel Club dog show. It's a display of automotive breeding that takes the most expensive luxury sedan from its Hyundai sister company—the Equus—and tweaks it for an even more value-oriented buyer.

Offered as Kia's best in show, the K900 is a premium five-seat sedan that is also its first to be driven with a V-8 engine and rear-wheel drive, the math being that power (plus) performance (equals) luxury. It's an equation that has long worked for the Germans. But a \$60,400-plus Kia is quite the departure.

Kia is South Korea's oldest car company. Founded 70 years ago as a bicycle maker, it began building cars in 1974 and selling them in the U.S. in 1994, at which point the brand quickly became synonymous with cheap. It's a reputation Kia has struggled to shed ever since, despite offering increasingly higher-end vehicles, such as its Optima sedan.

So the K900 is a huge leap. Costing almost twice as much as its previously most premium offering, the \$35,100 Cadenza sedan introduced last year, the K900 may be a celebration of Kia's 20 years in the U.S. market, but it is also a grand experiment to test the idea that a luxury experience trumps brand status.

Kia spent much of last week wooing the automotive press with the highest-end version of its highest-end car at a high-end event based at the swanky Pelican Hill resort in Newport Coast, Calif. For a day, I spent almost 200 miles in its \$66,400 V-8 K900 equipped with a VIP package that

adds power reclining and ventilation to the rear seats and various technological firsts for Kia. That includes a head-up display in the driver's windshield, a surround-view monitor that displays all four corners of the car on the center console screen to help with parking, and advanced smart cruise control that not only maintains the car's following distance but can bring it to a full stop as well as re-accelerate.

The VIP package offers a lot

absent from the steering wheel I would've guessed I was driving a Lexus LS460. Its steering is slightly soft, its ride quality confident and comfortable without being especially sporty. If it had been any more quiet, spacious and spallike, I would've been inspired to take a nap.

The rear seat is especially comfort-oriented with terrific leg room and a control panel in the center armrest that can operate the rear window sunshade, turn on the heated seats—even move the front passenger seat forward at the touch of a button.

The K900 shares the same basic platform and powertrain as the \$61,250 Hyundai Equus, except its overall length is slightly shorter to give the car a more modern stance. Its inside space has, however, manned up with more head and leg room added to the front seats and subtracted from the rear, which is still plenty roomy.

The K900 doesn't strive for European athleticism, though its 5-liter V-8 offers a satisfying amount of off-the-line performance as it shifts through its eight gears smoothly and automatically. The gear shift can be operated as a semimanual, but the steering wheel lacks paddle shifters.

Like many cars these days, the K900 can be operated in three drive modes—normal, sport and eco—that moderately affect its acceleration and suspension settings. But the true goal of the K900 is comfort and luxury.

While every other automaker is making their engines smaller and

more efficient, Kia is confident that V-8 power is the best connotation of luxury, even if it yields a mere 15 mpg city, 23 mpg highway.

The V-8 K900 will be available later this month. Kia will offer a \$50,000-ish, 311-horsepower V-6 option by summer.

Overall, the K900 looks more like its price tag from the inside than from out. Its silhouette is sleek without being truly striking. While the vents on its front quarter panels and its trapezoidal taillights and matchy-matchy exhaust from the rear are attractive, the front end is a train wreck. Observing the K900 from my rear view mirror, the odd-shaped grille looked more busy than elegant, especially in combination with the dots of LED running lights.

But throw open the doors and slide inside, and it's a very different story. It truly is well done, with soft leather seats and a dashboard inlaid with shiny wood. From the tactile microsuede headliner and pillars to the offset stitching of its leather to the door-mounted seat adjustment that is clearly copied from Mercedes, it feels Germanic. The same week I drove the K900 I was also testing out the new Audi A6 TDI, the cockpit of which looks shockingly similar, with a thoughtfully laid-out center console to operate its audio, navigation and telematics.

The Koreans, it seems, are even better copycats than the Chinese.

Unlike every other Kia, which comes with a 10-year, 100,000-mile warranty, the K900 includes a three-year, 37,500-mile scheduled maintenance program that covers the first five service visits, but not wear and tear fixes to brakes and tires.

That could well suffice, since 90 percent of luxury vehicle drivers aren't, in fact, owners. They lease.

MOTORING Q&A

Buick shows classic symptoms of vapor lock

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: Here is a problem that I have fought for almost two years. My 2001 Buick Regal will not start after a shutdown and heat soak. The car has 128,000 miles, never shuts down while driving, and starts and runs perfectly in the morning. When it won't restart, you can crank it until the battery runs down but the car won't start. After shutting the engine off, it will start immediately—if you don't wait too long!

Engine operating temperature is normal; it never overheats and has a new thermostat and ECT sensor. There are no intake manifold leaks, either vacuum or coolant. Fuel pressure is normal but a new regulator was installed along with a new MAF sensor. In a no-start condition the spark will jump a gap of at least one inch at the coil.

In the summer I carry a jug of water in the trunk (in winter I use snow) and in a no-start condition I pour about a quart of water on the intake plenum. The car will start right away and will run perfectly until the next no-start condition.

ANSWER: I can't recall a better description of vapor lock. The proper term is fuel percolation, which describes residual engine heat boiling the ready fuel supply in the fuel rails near the plenum/intake manifold. When this occurs, fuel pressure fades due to the aerated fuel disrupting fuel delivery from the injectors. Even though fuel pressure may be "normal" when tested with the engine running, I suspect fuel pressure drops quickly after shutdown due to percolation.

Using water to cool the intake stops the percolation. The first few injector pulses bleed air from the rail and, as fuel pressure returns, the engine starts.

But how to eliminate the problem? Start with three simple steps. Idle the engine for 30 seconds before shutdown to allow coolant to carry residual combustion heat from the cylinder heads into the radiator. Pop the hood open to the safety catch position to allow hot air to escape from under the hood. And try different brands of fuel, looking for a fuel with a vapor pressure less prone to this issue.

In addition, make sure airflow through the A/C condenser and radiator is clear and unobstructed. If the cooling system hasn't been serviced recently, a power flush might lower coolant and underhood temperatures measurably.

And to cover all the bases, turn the ignition to the "on" position and listen for the fuel pump to run for two seconds and then stop, confirming that the fuel pump relay and fuel pump are operating properly. I'd also test for injector pulse widths from the PCM to confirm that the fuel injectors are being commanded to open/close on a hot restart.

Q: I have a well-maintained 2003 Acura 3.2L TL-S model with 114,000 miles. My Goodyear dealer has continued to propose replacement of the timing belt and water pump. He said the belt should have been replaced at the seven-year mark or 100,000 miles. I can't seem to find any definitive recommendations from Acura or on the Internet about this repair. I want to maintain the car and continue to drive it for a number of years and would value your opinion on this repair.

A: Acura's service recommendation for this vehicle and engine, as outlined in my Alldata automotive database, calls for timing belt replacement at 105,000 miles/84 months under normal operating conditions. Under severe service conditions—operation at ambient temperatures under minus-20 degrees or above 110—replacement is recommended every 60,000 miles.

With this engine, a timing belt failure could allow contact between pistons and valves, resulting in catastrophic engine failure, so a new timing belt makes perfect sense. Include pre-emptive replacement of the water pump.

Paul Brand, author of How to Repair Your Car, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver.

NUTS & BOLTS

2015 Kia K900:

- **Powertrain:** Direct-injected, 5-liter, V-8, DOHC, continuously variable valve timing, 8-speed automatic
- **Horsepower:** 420 at 6,400 rpm
- **Torque:** 376 at 5,000 rpm
- **Wheelbase:** 119.9 inches
- **Overall length:** 200.6 inches
- **Curb weight:** 4,555 pounds
- **EPA-estimated fuel economy:** 15 mpg city, 23 mpg highway
- **Base price:** \$60,400
- **Price as tested (with VIP package):** \$66,400

Prices include destination charge.

Life & Style



Utah polygamous family says going on TV liberating

By **BRADY McCOMBS**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The newest Utah polygamous family featured in a reality TV show says sharing their story with a wide audience has been liberating.

Brady Williams and his five wives were a bit apprehensive ahead of the airing of a pilot episode in September, but they said this week an interview with The Associated Press that it felt liberating to be open about who they are and what they believe.

"It really is like coming out of the closet," said Brady Williams, 43. "It's very liberating."

His wives feel the same way, including his second, Robyn Williams, 40, who said: "I feel more free to just be who I am and not be so afraid."

The first of nine episodes of the show, "My Five Wives," airs Sunday on TLC, a cable television station. It chronicles the life of Brady Williams, his five

wives and their 24 children who live in a small rural community outside of Salt Lake City dominated by a polygamous Mormon fundamentalist church.

The family once belonged to the group, known as the Apostolic United Brethren, but withdrew during the mid-2000s after re-evaluating their core beliefs. Now, they practice polygamy not because they think they must to get to heaven, and avoid hell, but because they prefer the lifestyle.

Their show begins airing in a social and political climate that has softened significantly toward plural families in recent years.

A federal judge in Utah struck down key parts of the state's polygamy laws in December, marking a victory for the Williams and hundreds of other polygamous families in the state. The ruling decriminalizes polygamy, making only bigamy—holding marriage licenses

with multiple partners —illegal.

The family that brought that lawsuit against the state of Utah, Kody Brown and his four wives from TLC's "Sister Wives," is credited with helping create greater acceptance for plural families. Their show, which debuted in 2010 with footage of the family at their house in northern Utah, was ground-breaking in demonstrating to viewers across the country that not all polygamists are child predators like Warren Jeffs, the imprisoned leader of a polygamous sect on the Utah-Arizona border.

The Williams family members said they don't expect viewers to be surprised by much, other than maybe how similar they are to non-polygamous families. It's normal times five, the family jokes. Viewers will see tears, joy and quarrels, they said.

TLC is banking on viewers being fascinated by the unique dynamics of a

plural family: regular family sit-down meetings among the adults where Brady Williams follows an agenda written on a notepad; side-by-side multiplexes where they live; and nightly family dinners where the children line up like kids in a school cafeteria to get their food.

Then there's the always-intriguing dynamic among the wives who share a husband. In the first episode, Brady Williams suggests the women work out their issues directly with one another rather than always coming to him, only to see it lead to hurt feelings and shouting.

Among the topics discussed by the family during the season is a possible move out of Utah, maybe even to Washington state.

The Browns of "Sister Wives" fled Utah for Las Vegas after their show aired under the threat of prosecution from a county official. The Williams

aren't terribly worried about that happening to them, as long as the recent court ruling stands. But they say they don't feel welcomed in the tight-knit community where almost everyone but them belongs to the church.

"There haven't been any overt acts of disapproval," Brady Williams said. But he added: "We want to be able to feel comfortable in our own skin."

Aaron Bronson, a principal at the school in the community and member of the Apostolic United Brethren, said he doesn't begrudge the Williams family for doing the show. He said the production crews have been respectful, and he's heard no complaints from the Williams family's neighbors.

"If they want to go public with what they believe, it's their choice," Bronson said. "It's not something I would choose to do with my family. It's a rocky road."



'Holy grail of guitars' among those in NY auction

NEW YORK (AP)—The "holy grail of guitars" is among the hundreds of rare and vintage acoustic guitars going on the auction block in New York next month.

California collector Hank Risan is offering some of his musical instruments for auction by Guernsey's on April 2 and April 3. The 265 pieces

A 1920's Regal Superior Mandolin guitar is unveiled during a press preview, Wednesday March 5, 2014 in New York. The guitar is among a collection of 265 extremely rare guitars from a single individual that will auction at Guernsey's on April 2 and 3.

AP

from his collection are considered among the finest of vintage guitars to come to auction in terms of rarity, original construction and condition, the auction house says.

A wide range of makers are represented, including Gibson, Gretsch, Washburn, Stromberg and D'Angelico.

The earliest instrument in Risan's collection dates to 1840; the newest is a 2000 re-creation of a 1930 Martin masterpiece, an OM-45 Deluxe. Both the re-creation and the original will be in the auction.

"The OM-45 Deluxe is the holy grail of guitars," Guernsey's President Arlan Ettinger said. Only 14 were ever made.

Among other highlights are a 1900 Manuel Ramirez Flamenco and a 1939 D'Angelico New Yorker.

John D'Angelico was a guitar maker with a studio in Greenwich Village during the first half of the 20th century; his guitars have been described by some "as the Stradivarius of guitars," Ettinger said.

Pre-sale estimates of the instruments were still being worked out Friday.

Several previously celebrity-owned guitars also will be auctioned off: a 1941 Gibson SJ-200 played by Stephen Stills of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young; a 1967 Gibson SJN Country Western used by Mick Jagger on his 1987 album

"Primitive Cool"; and a 1959 Gibson J-200 that Eric Clapton once owned.

The sale also includes a handful of mandolins, including a late 1920s Style 221 Regal Superior crafted from Brazilian Rosewood with inlaid pearl vine inserts.

"These are not simply handsome-looking, finely crafted objects. They are, first and foremost, musical instruments and were created to be played,"

Risan, of Santa Cruz, is founder of the virtual Museum of Musical Instruments and CEO of Media Rights Technologies Inc. According to his website, his first guitar was a vintage Martin purchased when he was 16.

Wes Anderson dreams of a Europe before bombs fell

By JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—A new Wes Anderson film arrives like a magician's latest illusion, greeted by questions of not just "How does he do it?" but "What is it, exactly?"

Anderson, like few other directors, has perpetually kept critics and moviegoers off-balance with his idiosyncratic blend of orchestrated whimsy, deep-rooted melancholy and deadpan slapstick. When he privately screened his second film, "Rushmore," for Pauline Kael, the rarely uncertain critic responded, "I don't know what you've got here, Wes." Lacking a more sufficient barometer, his movies are typically first judged on a scale of how "Wes Anderson-y" it is.

On that count, his latest registers about a 10. "The Grand Budapest Hotel," which opened Friday, is ultimately about a fastidious concierge named M. Gustave (Ralph Fiennes) and the lobby boy, Zero (newcomer Tony Revolori), he takes on as a protege at an ornate alpine resort in the fictional Republic of Zubrowka. After a multilayered framing device guided across eras by characters played by Jude Law, Tom Wilkinson and F. Murray Abraham, the film presents a portrait of the Grand Budapest Hotel in the 1930s, just as the rise of fascism (the SS here is the ZZ) is bringing an end to a refined way of life.

Gustave, who efficiently runs the hotel with old-world elegance but an unapologetic unscrupulousness (he has a habit of bedding old widows), is twice called in the film "a glimmer of civilization in the barbaric slaughterhouse we know as humanity."

It's a caper, with a stolen painting, a murderous stalking scene (taken straight out of Hitchcock's "Torn Curtain"), an elaborate prison break and



This image released by Fox Searchlight shows director Wes Anderson, left, with Jude Law on the set of "The Grand Budapest Hotel."

a gun fight. There are the old-fashioned hotel accoutrements of an elevator seat, a bathhouse, comically small servants' quarters and a funicular. It's an early 20th century playhouse for Anderson—a dream of a genteel Europe that never quite existed, imagined by someone steeped in movies (Ernst Lubitsch and '30s Hitchcock, in particular) and the stories of early 1900s Viennese author Stefan Zweig (a major inspiration on the film).

Anderson's eighth film also may be for the 44-year-old director the definitive statement about his kind of movie reality.

With miniatures (like the exterior of the hotel) mixed in and a ski chase scene filmed with figurines, its plainly artificial environs are crowded with realistically emotional characters.

"When I see a James Bond movie, I see a great deal of artificiality," Anderson said in a recent interview. "It's a style of special effects that's just very familiar to us right now and we accept as a version of reality."

"There's no layer of artiness about it," he says. "Not that I'm deeply opposed to it, but just for my own work, I'm not particularly drawn to that way of

working. I like to see if we can experiment with old-fashioned techniques that I've always really liked. I love miniatures and different kinds of animations—things that are like magic tricks. I'm drawn to those. I feel like they have a certain charm. And I just sort of make an assumption that we all know that this is a kind of a concoction."

Anderson doesn't just delight in antiquated film techniques. His films—his concoctions—are in many ways odes to analog worlds: the record player of "Moonrise Kingdom," the book jackets of "The Royal Tenenbaums," the

portraits of "Rushmore."

Many of his protagonists are quixotic champions of bygone worlds, dauntlessly trying to keep something old and beautiful alive, or at least some romantic idea of it. As Max pleads in "Rushmore," "I saved Latin!"

In "The Grand Budapest Hotel," a narrator says of Gustav: "His world had vanished long before he ever entered it, but he certainly sustained the illusion with a remarkable grace."

The same, of course, could be said of Anderson, who has a serene but down-to-earth way about him, more self-deprecat-

ing than precious.

The film depicts the slow decline of a once great hotel across the years, which he notes "feels a bit like tragedy." But the Texas-native, who currently lives in New York but spent recent years in Europe, says he's not pining away at life in some prior era.

"My experience as a foreigner in Europe has always been much more being dazzled by: There's an old world that is still there," he says.

Zweig, however, killed himself in 1942, leaving a note that lamented the self-destruction of "my spiritual home, Europe." "We haven't been through these kind of things," says Anderson. "We would have to fake that level of cynicism."

Anderson doesn't hold the past so dear that he doesn't revel in a line of comically antiquated language like "Gunther was slayed in the catacombs," or connect phrases like "Prussian grippe" and "candy ass." Fiennes, who drew from the debonair Austrian actor Anton Walbrook ("The Red Shoes") relished the dialogue, sped up like a '30s comedy.

"Nothing prepared me for the musical brio and sort of sprightliness of the film," says Fiennes. "I relied upon Wes as a guide. He had written the screenplay, but he has quite an ear for speaking the delivery, the timing. He has a musically precise ear."

"The Grand Budapest Hotel" was shot in Gorkitz, Germany, with a converted department store for the hotel interior. Production designer Adam Stockhausen, working with Anderson for the third time, said as detailed as Anderson is in his complicated shots, his process isn't "predetermined," but open to inspirations and ideas that come out of working on location.

"What he does is very serious work telling stories. He happens to have a strong visual style," says Stockhausen. "That's just his vocabulary."

Jonathan Demme selling vast art collection

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A riot of color greeted Oscar-winning director Jonathan Demme the first time he walked into Haitian Corner, an art gallery around the corner from his Manhattan apartment. Instantly transfixed, he left with a \$250 painting by Haitian master Wilson Bigaud. The seed was planted.

Demme's appreciation for work by self-taught Haitian painters like Bigaud and Hector Hyppolite flowered into an obsession that he fed with multiple trips to the cash poor but artistically rich island nation, where he learned Creole and shot two documentaries.

"If you're falling in love with a country, falling in love with

their art is a great lubricant and a great elixir," Demme said. "Haitian art led me to Haiti for the first time, and I discovered a great country and a great people, and the art takes on a greater meaning for me now."

Now 70 and having spent the better part of three decades amassing pieces from Haiti and other Caribbean countries as well as the United States, South America and Africa, the director of "The Silence of the Lambs" said he's looking to "streamline and simplify" his life by selling 90 percent of his well-regarded collection of self-taught or "outsider" art.

More than 900 pieces—many of them by artists with little or no formal training but abundant talent—will be auc-



This photo provided by Material Culture, "Bareback Riders & Clowns Under the Big Top" by John Steuart Curry is shown.

tioned at Philadelphia's Material Culture on March 29-30.

The sale will be preceded by a weeklong exhibition that is free

and open to the public.

"He really has followed his eye and his heart in putting this collection together," George Jevremovic, Material Culture's owner, said. "A lot of high-profile folks get advisers and they spend tons of money on works that may end up at Christie's or Sotheby's, million-dollar artwork."

Demme, on the other hand, was drawn to self-taught art "on a personal level and that's the way the best collections are created, where the eye and the intellect of the collector find their own ground," Jevremovic said.

The director traces his love of artists who taught themselves how to paint and sculpt to a childhood spent watching his mother sketch landscapes.

"Anybody can go to college and learn to paint academically," Demme said. "I certainly

love fine art; I don't reject it. I love to go to museums. But there's something about that sincere work, trying to capture a feeling in an image, that just turns me on."

Demme, whose collection includes many pieces produced at the Centre d'Art, the landmark Port-au-Prince art cooperative destroyed in the 2010 earthquake, said he plans to donate a portion of the proceeds to the rebuilding effort. The auction is expected to bring in \$1 million to \$1.4 million.

Demme is OK with letting go of his treasures, comparing himself to a parent sending his kids to college.

"You're going to miss having them around, but they are making the right journey. This work is leaving storage and my walls and going out to find new homes."

'300' sequel rules box office with \$45.1M debut

NEW YORK (AP)—The shirtless warriors of the "300" sequel "Rise of an Empire" ravaged the post-Oscars box-office weekend with a domestic debut of \$45.1 million but an even bigger international haul of \$87.8 million.

Seven years after the original "300" became an unlikely, ultra-stylish, blood-soaked sensation, Warner Bros.' 3-D follow-up showed considerable might at the box office. While "300: Rise of an Empire" didn't come close to the North American debut of Zack Snyder's 2007 original (\$70.9 million and without the benefit of 3-D ticket prices), it performed like a blockbuster overseas.

"Rise of an Empire," which with flexed torsos and lots of bloodshed further chronicles the ancient battles of the Greeks and Persians, led a busy box-office weekend that also saw an Academy Awards bump for "12 Years a Slave" and one of the highest per-screen averages ever for Wes Anderson's European caper "The Grand Budapest Hotel."

Though "300: Rise of an Empire" is excessively macho, Eva Green—the film's fiercest presence—may have drawn females for what was always going to be a male-centric release. Whereas the female audience for the first "300" was only 29 percent, it was 38 percent for "Rise of an Empire."

"Talk about female empowerment," said Jeff Goldstein, head of domestic distribution for Warner Bros., of the "Casino Royale" actress.

Noting the popularity of 3-D and IMAX screenings for the movie, Goldstein credited the



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Eva Green in the film, "300: Rise of an Empire." **AP**

visual panache of producer Snyder (Noam Murro took over directing), who drew directly from Frank Miller's graphic novels: "He brings a lot to the screen that mesmerizes you."

Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak, said the "300" franchise "translates to virtually every culture. Every country can appreciate the visuals of these movies."

The week's other new wide release, 20th Century Fox's

animated "Mr. Peabody & Sherman," opened in second with \$32.5 million. Though the performance was better than some expected, it's a relatively low total for a film that cost about \$140 million to make.

The film is based on the cartoon about a time-traveling boy and his brilliant dog from "The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show." Some of the family film market was likely taken by Warner Bros.' hit "The Lego Movie," which added \$11 million

in its fifth weekend.

The Liam Neeson thriller "Non-Stop" slid to third place with \$15.4 million in the Universal release's second weekend after topping the box office last week.

In limited release, "The Grand Budapest Hotel" made an astounding average of \$200,000 on four screens in New York and Los Angeles. Fox Searchlight will expand the film by 65 to 75 theaters next week.

The specialty studio also celebrated the best picture Oscar win for "12 Years a Slave" with a notable bump of \$2.2 million, even though it was released on DVD and video-on-demand Tuesday. That was up 123 percent on the prior weekend for the film, which first opened in November.

"12 Years a Slave" drew even more international interest, where it made \$9.1 million as moviegoers flocked to see the Academy Award winner for best picture.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Where available, latest international numbers are also included.

1. **"300: Rise of an Empire,"** \$45.1 million (\$87.8 million international).
2. **"Mr. Peabody & Sherman,"** \$32.5 million (\$21 million international).
3. **"Non-Stop,"** \$15.4 million (\$12 million international).
4. **"The Lego Movie,"** \$11 million (\$9.9 million international).
5. **"Son of God,"** \$10 million.
6. **"The Monuments Men,"** \$3.1 million (\$3.7 million international).
7. **"3 Days to Kill,"** \$3.1 million.
8. **"Frozen,"** \$3 million (\$3.6 million international).
9. **"12 Years a Slave,"** \$2.2 million (\$9.1 million international).
10. **"Ride Along,"** \$2 million (\$1.8 million international).

Obama to introduce 'Cosmos' debut Sunday



This photo released by Fox shows Neil deGrasse Tyson, the astrophysicist who hosts the television show, "Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey," premiering Sunday, March 9, 2014, 9:00-10:00 PM ET/PT on Fox and simultaneously across multiple U.S. Fox networks. **AP**

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Fox TV network says President Barack Obama will introduce the debut episode of the science series "Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey."

The 13-part program is a reboot of astronomer Carl Sagan's groundbreaking 1980 "Cosmos" series. It debuts Sunday night on stations including Fox and National Geographic Channel.

In Obama's taped video message, he invites viewers to em-

brace the spirit of discovery and imagine limitless possibilities for the future, Fox said Saturday.

Astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson is the host of "Cosmos," which also will air on Fox International Channels and National Geographic Channels International.

Last month, a preview of the new "Cosmos" series was screened at the White House as part of a film festival for elementary and high school students.

'Book of Mormon' musical coming to Utah in 2015

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A popular satirical musical about Mormon missionaries will play next year in Salt Lake City, just down the street from the worldwide headquarters of the faith it's mocking.

The "Book of Mormon" musical has been scheduled for a run at the Capitol Theatre from July 28 to Aug. 9, 2015. This will be the first time the show has come to Salt Lake City since it de-

buted on Broadway in 2011.

The Capitol Theatre is less than a half mile (800 meters) from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' flagship temple and headquarters.

The Mormon church on Friday reiterated its past statement about the show, saying it might entertain audiences for an evening, but the real Book of Mormon changes people's lives forever.

Fashion celebrity Mizrahi plans memoir for 2016

NEW YORK (AP)—Isaac Mizrahi will tell the whole story.

The fashion celebrity has a deal with Amy Einhorn Books for a memoir that will track his rise from an unhappy childhood in Brooklyn to hanging out at Studio 54 to international fame.

Amy Einhorn Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House, announced Thursday that the book is scheduled for release in 2016. It is tentatively titled, "I.M."

The 52-year-old Mizrahi previously wrote the fashion advice book "How to Have Style."



Mizrahi

Stalker starts dating cousin of woman who dumped him

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: About a year ago, I stopped seeing a man I'll call "Vince." Since then he has been stalking me. He sends me texts with photos he took of us while we were dating, but distorts them to make me look like I'm stabbing him in the heart. He sends videos with my head on a dancing Barbie doll. My neighbors tell me they see him drive past my house. (He lives across town.) I refuse to talk to him now because he scares me.

Dear Abby

Vince has now begun making moves on my cousin "Nancy." She says their relationship isn't romantic, but others have told me they have seen them cuddle at restaurants and parks. He still continues to send me scary pictures and emails.

How can I tell Nancy about this without her thinking it's jealous retaliation against their new relationship? I honestly believe he is getting close to her only to spite me and keep an emotional hold on me. His relationship with her has made me afraid to tell her about my personal life or hang out with her for fear that he'll show up with her.

CONFUSED IN OREGON

DEAR CONFUSED: I don't blame you for feeling intimidated, which is what your stalker is trying to accomplish. You can put an end to it by having your neighbors document his "drive-bys" and turning the pictures, videos and any other communications Vince has sent you over to the police. If he sent them via U.S. mail, the postmarks on the envelopes (and fingerprints) will prove what he has been up to. It may take a restraining order to put an end to this.

As to his relationship with your cousin, I agree that if she has feelings for him, she'll be reluctant to believe anything you tell her isn't sour grapes. However, if you show her the texts he's sending you—I presume they're time-stamped—she may believe you.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating "Dawn" for more than a year. She has an amazing 7-year-old daughter, "Charise," who started calling me Dad about six months after her mother and I began dating. I love being a "dad"—going to the park, on trips, helping out at school and telling bedtime stories.

The problem is, I don't love Dawn. We don't get along well anymore. My mother tells me I should find someone else and have kids of my own, but Charise "feels" like my kid. I can't imagine losing her.

One friend suggested I marry Dawn so I can stay in her daughter's life, but I want to be in love with the woman I marry. Am I wrong for not wanting to lose a child I consider my daughter, but not wanting to marry someone I don't love?

SPINNING MY WHEELS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SPINNING: Charise may "feel" like your child, but she ISN'T. And even though she may call you "Dad," you AREN'T. Your romance with her mother is already on the downhill slide, so the kindest thing you could do for all concerned is end the relationship. But before you do, it is important that you make clear to Charise that it has nothing to do with her or your feelings for her.

Your mother is right. You need to settle down with someone you can love. To follow your friend's suggestion would be a huge mistake.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

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By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

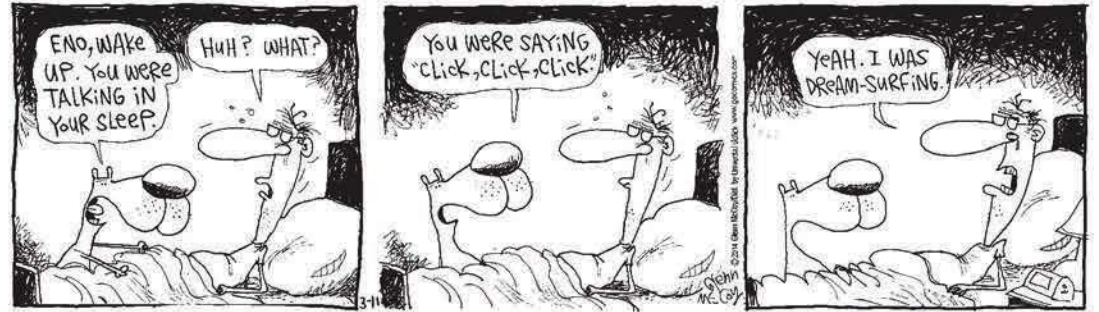
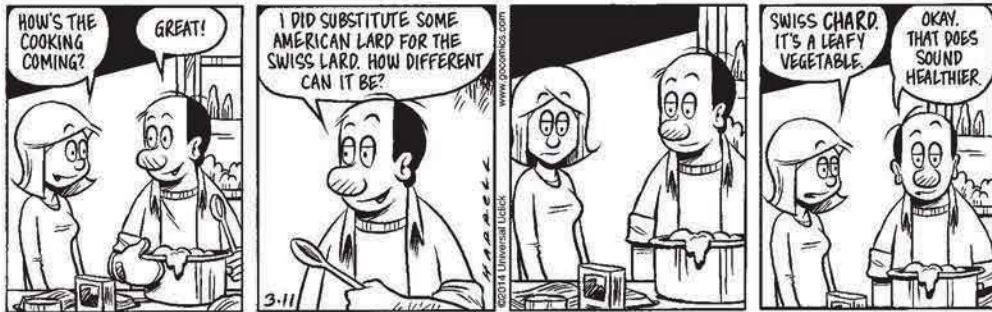


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

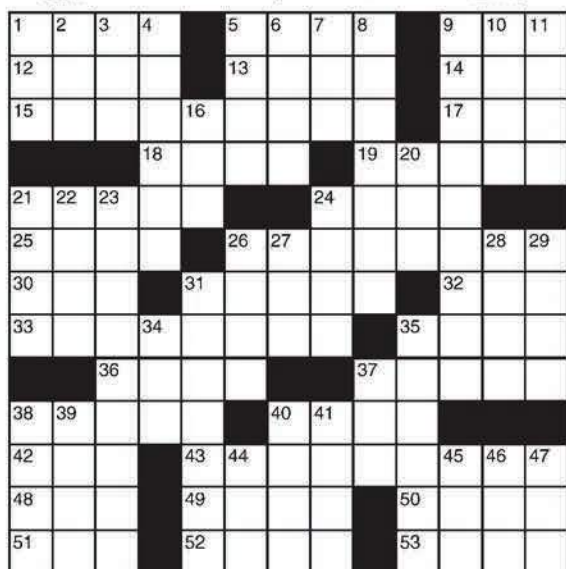
By Glenn McCoy



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By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bivouac
5 Tatters
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13 Elliptical
14 Kimono
15 Venetian
17 Drag
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22 Rose's
23 Aquatic
24 Sleeping
26 Caprice
27 Anger
28 "Damn
29 Took to
31 State
34 Pirouette
35 For quite
37 "No
38 Cordelia's
39 Exchange
40 Fail as a
41 Matter-
44 Tavern
45 "— Little
46 Hurry
47 Gaffer
- Solution time: 21 mins.**
- Yesterday's answer 3-11



STUMPED?

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CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Anton Yelchin, 25; Thora Birch, 32; Johnny Knoxville, 43; Terrence Howard, 45.

Happy Birthday: There is no room for error when it comes to your relationships and money matters. Safe investments are the only choice, and joint ventures will be taxing. You may feel inclined to help others, but charity begins at home. It's vital that you focus on protecting your assets, your partnerships and your physical well-being. Your numbers are 8, 14, 23, 27, 31, 38, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't throw your weight around. Let others make their own decisions and you will avoid getting into a heated discussion that will put a damper on your day. Focus on love, affection and being there for the ones you love. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Listen to what's being said, but don't feel you have to be a follower. Changes you make at home should add to your comfort or allow you to develop a plan that will bring in extra cash. A partnership must be carefully considered. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't dillydally. Present the facts and you will get the help you need to follow through with your plans. Love and romance are highlighted and can bring about a change in the way you live in the future. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't get angry; get moving. It's up to you to follow through with your plans. Don't feel you have to wait for someone else to make the first move. Good fortune comes to those willing to go after it. Use your imagination. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): If you reveal secret information, you will face the consequences. A move or lifestyle change may be necessary if you want to avoid someone infringing on your space. Invest in you and what you have to offer. Keep moving forward. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Find out who is up to what before you delve into a project that is time-consuming. Make sure there is something in it for you before offering your services. Success will be based on having the best team available. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Stay focused on what's expected of you and deliver the goods. Overreacting or making a fuss will only make you look bad. Show professionalism and you will secure your position personally and professionally. Use your charm and intelligence to win. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Sit back and observe. Knowledge is your best weapon when it comes to controversy. Don't get emotional when there are so many good places to put your energy. Creative changes at home will help you develop a new skill. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Love is in the stars and you can launch exciting ways to move forward personally. A deal may not be totally above board, but it is likely to bring in cash. Don't reveal your situation until you know it's secure. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Maintaining your reputation should take top priority. Avoid getting drawn into an

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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argument. Don't meddle or offer advice. Protect your position, important partnerships and the way you do business. A force play can be expected if you show signs of weakness. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Look at what's being offered, see what you have to contribute and make your move swiftly. Love is highlighted and offering a diverse and unusual romantic scenario will capture someone's interest. Invest in your emotional and financial future. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be true to yourself. Size up your situation and position yourself for success. Socializing will bring greater personal and professional opportunities. Dealing with younger and older individuals will be inspiring and educational, as well as expand your social options. *****

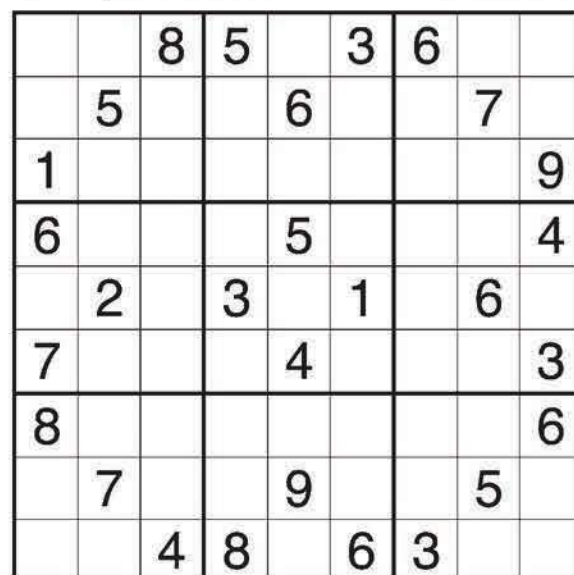
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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★

3/11

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★

3/11

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BAGELS AND CREAM CHEESE

Solution: 5 letters



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Yesterday's Answer: Banks

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Meeks powers Lakers past Durant, Thunder, 114-110



LOS ANGELES (AP)—From Jodie Meeks' big day to the final result, this was definitely a surprise.

Meeks scored 24 of his career-high 42 points in the second half, and the Los Angeles Lakers beat Oklahoma City 114-110 on Sunday despite a triple-double by Thunder star Kevin Durant.

Pau Gasol added 20 points and 11 rebounds for the injury-ravaged Lakers, who had lost 29 of their previous 37 games. Meeks was 11 of 18 from the field and 14 for 14 at the line while becoming the third player to reach the 30-point mark this season for last-place Los Angeles (22-42).

"The most important thing is that we keep going out there and fighting and not giving up," Meeks said. "The season isn't going the way that we planned, but we still have 18 games left. So we'll play them hard and see what happens."

Meeks is averaging 19.2 points in 11 games since returning from a sprained right ankle. Before the injury, he was averaging 14.4.

"He got on fire," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "He has really improved his game. Defensively, he was out of sight on Russell Westbrook the whole time. He put out a lot of energy in this game, but he has been doing that on a pretty consistent basis. Jodie has been our most consistent performer. It's really fun to watch someone get better."

Durant had 27 points, 10 rebounds and 12 assists for his third triple-double this season. Serge Ibaka had 21 points and 15 boards for Oklahoma City.

The Thunder (46-17) began the day in a three-way tie with San Antonio and Indiana for the NBA's best record. The Pacers played at Dallas on Sunday night and the Spurs were idle.

"We lost. In some games, someone will have 40 points on you that is not supposed to have 40," Durant said. "We pressure hard so high out on the pick-and-roll that it opened everything up, and they exploited it. They were hitting the pocket passes and going through the lane to get the ball to their shooters. But that is how we play, so we have to figure out how to make second and third efforts."

After giving up an average of 136 points over their previous three games while losing to New Orleans, the Clippers and Denver, the Lakers trailed the Thunder by as many as 18 in the second quarter before taking their first lead on a pair of free throws by Meeks that made it 71-70 with 4:35 left in the third.

"I was trying to get my teammates involved, and they did a great job finding me in transition and in some set plays. So I give credit to those guys for helping me out with a big game," Meeks said. "Being in a rhythm like that is fun, but getting a win is

also fun. That was most important thing. We were down 18, so I was trying to do anything I could to help the team get back in the game."

The Thunder are 3-5 since beating the Lakers 107-103 at Staples Center on Feb. 13 behind 43 points by Durant, who is vying for his fourth scoring title in five seasons.

The Lakers took a 12-point lead into the fourth quarter and increased it to 95-77 on Jordan Farmar's 3-pointer with 9:42 remaining. Durant then fueled a 20-7 run with 10 points and former Laker Derek Fisher capped the rally with back-to-back 3s 24 seconds apart, pulling the Thunder to 102-97 with 4:36 to play.

Russell Westbrook, who had 20 points, seven rebounds and eight assists for the Thunder, narrowed the gap to 110-107 on a driving dunk with 57.3 seconds on the clock. But he missed everything on another 3-point try 24 seconds later and newly acquired Kent Bazemore helped put it away with a driving layup—two of his seven points in the final 2:02.

Westbrook finished 7 for 23 from the field and tied a season worst with eight turnovers.

"We need to have a sense of urgency, knowing that teams are coming at us every night," Westbrook said. "I missed some shots, but I do not think the game is all about shooting."

Bulls 95, Heat 88, OT

In Chicago, Joakim Noah had 20 points and 12 rebounds, D.J. Augustin scored 22 and the Chicago Bulls beat the Miami Heat in overtime after Jimmy Butler stripped the ball from LeBron James at the end of regulation.

Dwyane Wade scored 25 for Miami, but with James struggling again, the Heat dropped their third straight to match their longest losing streak of the season.

James scored 17 points on 8-of-23 shooting and couldn't come through after Miami blew a 12-point lead down the stretch. With a chance to win it at the end of regulation, he was stopped by Butler on a layup attempt.

In overtime, it was all Bulls. Chicago outscored Miami 9-2, starting with Augustin's 3 just under a minute in.

Noah also had seven assists and five blocks with his dad—tennis great Yannick Noah—looking on. Butler added 16 points and 11 rebounds.

Mavericks 105, Pacers 94

In Dallas, Monta Ellis and Devin Harris scored 20 points apiece and Dallas extended Indiana's season-worst losing streak to four games.

The Pacers rallied from 17 points down in the first half and almost wiped out another double-digit deficit after halftime, but had the same offensive troubles late that plagued them early in the game.



Los Angeles Lakers shooting guard Jodie Meeks (20) shoots a 3-point basket over Oklahoma City Thunder point guard Reggie Jackson during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Sunday, March 9, 2014.

Paul George had 27 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Pacers, who stayed 1½ games up on Miami for the Eastern Conference lead.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 14 points on a tough shooting night as the Mavericks swept the two-game season series from the Pacers, who were coming off their most lopsided loss in a 26-point defeat at Houston.

Ellis, who also had eight rebounds, put the game away in the final 2 minutes with a pair of jumpers.

Dallas' reserves outscored Indiana's 41-4.

Rockets 118, Trail Blazers 113, OT

In Houston, James Harden scored 41 points, Jeremy Lin had 26 and Houston rallied to beat Portland in overtime for its fifth straight victory.

The Trail Blazers led by three in overtime after two free throws by Wesley Matthews. The Rockets took over from there, using an 8-2 run with a 3-pointer from Harden and four points from Lin to make it 116-

113 with 35.4 seconds left. Lin added two free throws after that.

Harden hit a 3 with seconds left in regulation to send it to overtime.

LaMarcus Aldridge led Portland with 28 points and 12 rebounds, but managed just two points in OT.

Dwight Howard had 17 points with 12 rebounds, and Chandler Parsons scored 16 for Houston.

Warriors 113, Suns 107

In Oakland, Calif., Stephen Curry overcame a strained right quad to finish with 18 points and nine assists, and Golden State held off Phoenix for its fourth straight win.

David Lee had 26 points and nine rebounds, and Klay Thompson scored 22 points for the Warriors, who built an 18-point lead early in the fourth quarter before the Suns surged back.

Gerald Green had 25 points and six rebounds, and Goran Dragic added 24 points and six assists for the Suns, who dropped into a tie with Mem-

phis for eighth place in the Western Conference standings.

Golden State is 9-2 since the All-Star break and a season-high 16 games over .500. The Warriors are two games ahead of Dallas for sixth in the West.

Nets 104, Kings 89

In New York, Marcus Thornton scored 15 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter against his old team, and Joe Johnson added 18 points to help Brooklyn overcome an injury to Paul Pierce in a victory over Sacramento.

Alan Anderson had 11 points and Shaun Livingston and Deron Williams each scored 10 as the Nets won for the fifth time in six games.

DeMarcus Cousins had 20 points and 28 rebounds to lead the Kings. Rudy Gay added 20 points.

Brooklyn led by 16 in the first half after losing Pierce to a right shoulder injury early in the first quarter.

Sacramento trailed 49-40 at halftime but opened the third quarter with a 17-8 run to tie the score at 57 with 7:38 left in

the period. Brooklyn outscored Sacramento 47-32 the rest of the way.

Pelicans 111, Nuggets 107, OT

In New Orleans, Anthony Davis tied his career high with 32 points, grabbed 17 rebounds and blocked six shots, and New Orleans erased a 16-point deficit to capture its third straight victory by downing Denver.

Tyreke Evans had 20 points and Anthony Morrow added 14, including a 15-foot pullup in the lane that tied the game at 94 with 1 second left in regulation.

Davis' free throws gave New Orleans the lead for good at 106-104, and his block of Ty Lawson's driving layup prevented Denver from tying it with 1:14 left in overtime.

Davis became the first player in franchise history—going back to the club's founding as the Charlotte Hornets in 1988—to have as many points, rebounds and blocks in one game.

Kenneth Faried had 22 points and 10 rebounds for Denver.

Raptors 111, Timberwolves 104

In Minneapolis, Kyle Lowry had 20 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists for his fourth career triple-double, lifting Toronto over Minnesota.

DeMar DeRozan added 25 points and seven rebounds and Steve Novak hit five 3-pointers for the surprising Raptors, who have won nine of their last 11 games to climb to third place in the Eastern Conference standings. Toronto shot 58.3 percent (14 for 24) on 3-pointers.

Kevin Love had 26 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists, and Nikola Pekovic added 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Timberwolves. Minnesota has started a crucial four-game homestand with two losses in three games, and the team's hopes of climbing from 10th in the West into the playoff picture are looking bleak.

Celtics 118, Pistons 111

In Boston, Rajon Rondo had 11 points and a season-high 18 assists, Jeff Green scored 27 points and Boston had its second-highest scoring output of the season to defeat Detroit.

Kris Humphries added a season-high 20 points, including two free throws with 25 seconds left to help Boston seal the win after the Pistons closed to 113-109. Humphries led Boston with 11 rebounds.

Jerryd Bayless scored 15 points, Kelly Olynyk added 18 and Jared Sullinger 14 for the Celtics.

Josh Smith had 28 points and 11 rebounds for the Pistons and was one of three Detroit players with double-doubles. Andre Drummond had 18 points and 22 rebounds and Greg Monroe finished with 22 points and 14 boards. Will Bynum added 18 points off the bench.

Reed on a roll, wins a World Golf Championship



DORAL, Fla. (AP)—He wore black pants and a red shirt, his Sunday colors. He took a lead into the final round, quickly expanded it with a pair of birdies and then relied on his short game to keep everyone chasing him. He even played it safe off the 18th tee, caring more about the trophy than the final score.

That script for years belonged to Tiger Woods.

Patrick Reed followed it perfectly to win the Cadillac Championship, replacing Woods as the youngest winner of a World Golf Championship.

“The best player ever to live when I was growing up wore black pants, a red shirt,” Reed said after closing with an even-par 72 for a one-shot victory at Doral. “I was growing up watching him. I always thought, ‘You know, it would be cool to wear black and red coming down on Sunday.’

“Just happens to be that we both wear it on Sunday now.”

Only one of them stood out at the new Blue Monster. Even with Woods and his red shirt only three shots behind and in the group directly in front of him, the 23-year-old Reed stretched his lead to four shots at one point until making a pair of bogeys in the final hour. He held off Bubba Watson and Jamie Donaldson of Wales.

Woods, in his best chance this year to win a tournament, said his back flared up after an awkward shot out of the bunker on the sixth hole. He failed to make a birdie in the final round for the first time in his PGA Tour career, and his 78 was his worst



Patrick Reed holds The Gene Sarazen Cup after winning the Cadillac Championship golf tournament Sunday, March 9, 2014, in Doral, Fla.

Sunday score ever.

“Just let me get through this day, get some treatment and we’ll assess it as time goes on,” Woods said about his back. He withdrew from the Honda Classic after 13 holes of the final round last week because of back spasms.

Reed has three wins in 14 starts and should move to No. 20 in the world. He feels his ranking should be even better. Reed cited an amateur career that includes going 6-0 in matches to lead Augusta State to two NCAA titles, followed by three PGA Tour wins in seven months.

“I don’t see a lot of guys that have done that besides Tiger

Woods and the legends of the game,” Reed said. “I believe in myself, especially with how hard I’ve worked. I’m one of the top five players in the world. I feel like I’ve proven myself.”

He joined some exclusive company. Since 1990, only Woods, Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy and Sergio Garcia had three PGA Tour wins before turning 24.

This was not an accident, either.

Reed has had a share of the lead going into the final round of all three of his victories—the Wyndham Championship last August, the Humana Challenge in January and a World Golf Championship at Doral that

featured the strongest field so far this year.

His last two wins were wire-to-wire, including ties.

Watson, who won at Riviera three weeks ago, went bogey-free over the final 27 holes, a strong performance on the overhauled Trump National Doral. He closed with a 68, finishing with par after blasting through the palms, into the grandstand and back into the rough.

Donaldson wasn’t so fortunate. He hit into a foot on the 17th for his third birdie on the back nine to get within one shot of the lead. From the 18th fairway—after watching Miguel Angel Jimenez go through the green and into the water—he

blocked his approach away from the flag and into the back bunker. Donaldson blasted out to just inside 15 feet and missed the par putt. He closed with a 70.

Reed finished at 4-under 284, matching the highest winning score at Doral. Mark McCumber won at 284 in 1985. He earned \$1.53 million, pushing his season total over \$3 million, and he moves to No. 3 in the Ryder Cup standings.

Reed, Donaldson and Watson were the only players to finish under par.

Woods raised more questions about his health—and his game—with the Masters just over a month away.

He beaned and bloodied a

spectator on the opening hole and missed a 10-foot birdie putt. He beaned another spectator on No. 3, kicking the ball back into the fairway, only he followed that with a shot into the water and made bogey. Woods made two more bogeys over the next three holes and was an afterthought. He said the pain intensified after his bunker shot on the sixth.

Woods had his left foot in the sand and his right foot flexed against the lip of the bunker.

“That’s what set it off and then it was done after that,” he said. “Just see if I could actually manage ... keep the spasms at bay.”

Woods has played only four tournaments, and only twice went 72 holes. He missed the 54-hole cut at Torrey Pines, tied for 41st in Dubai and withdrew at the Honda Classic.

He is scheduled to make only one more start—Bay Hill in two weeks—before Augusta National.

The other guy in the red shirt and black pants played like he knew what was doing with the lead. Reed left no doubt early that it would be his tournament to win.

His two-shot lead dwindled to one after a bogey from the bunker on the second hole, and that was as close as it got until it no longer mattered. He knocked in a 25-foot birdie from the back of the green at No. 3. He holed an 18-foot birdie putt on the tough par-3 fourth. Jason Dufner, playing in the final group, went into the water on the fourth to begin his quick slide. Reed made par on the next nine holes, and only in the final hour was the outcome ever in doubt.

Reed saved par from the bunker on Nos. 11, 13 and 15. His only bogey came on a 3 1/2-foot putt he missed at No. 14.

Pistorius trial: Stunning testimony in 1st week

By **GERALD IMRAY**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP)—The testimony in the first week of Oscar Pistorius’ murder trial was jaw dropping at times, and more riveting evidence is expected as the prosecution seeks to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the double-amputee athlete intentionally shot dead his girlfriend.

Pistorius’ once-inspiring life story unraveled as witnesses testified about his history of anger, infidelity and recklessness with guns, and his suspicious behavior on the night prosecutors allege the Olympian murdered his girlfriend and tried to cover it up.

Pistorius’ murder trial—which is being shown on live television across the world—also shed more light on the events in the pre-dawn hours of Valentine’s Day last year, when he shot dead Reeva Steenkamp in a bathroom in his home. Pistorius claims it

was an accident, but prosecutors have charged him with premeditated murder for the killing of the 29-year-old model.

In a Pretoria court, the first witness said she heard a woman’s “blood-curdling” screams coming from Pistorius’ house on the night he killed Steenkamp. Michelle Burger, a neighbor of Pistorius, sobbed in court after recalling that she was haunted by what she heard.

Another neighbor, who is a doctor, described in detail the grisly scene he was confronted with when he entered Pistorius’ home and found a fatally wounded Steenkamp lying on the floor and Pistorius kneeling next to her, weeping, praying and apparently trying to help his dying or dead girlfriend breathe even though she had a terrible gunshot wound in the head and the doctor knew there was little hope.

In court, Pistorius, 27, held his hands over his ears and hunched over as radiologist Johan Stipp recounted how he

could not find any signs of life on Steenkamp’s bloody body.

Pistorius shot Steenkamp through a toilet door with a 9 mm pistol, hitting her in the head, arm and hip area and killing her. He says he thought she was a dangerous intruder. Prosecutors, however, say Pistorius killed Steenkamp intentionally after a loud fight. Three neighbors have testified to hearing a woman screaming and a man shouting before gunfire. The celebrated runner, the first amputee to run at the Olympics, faces a life sentence with a minimum of 25 years in prison before parole if convicted of murder.

Pistorius has pleaded not guilty to all the charges against him; murder and three firearm-related offenses. Free on bail, he ended the first week of sometimes damaging prosecution testimony with his now usual routine outside the courthouse of jostling through a gantlet of press and public, flanked by police and security guards who

bundled him into an SUV with reflective windows.

“I really thought the state started well, I really did. They are starting with a left hook,” said former state prosecutor and now defense lawyer in South Africa, Marius du Toit, who is not involved in the case. “But, of course, the fight never lasts one round.”

A former girlfriend, who said she was 17 when she started dating Pistorius in 2011, painted a picture of a man quick to anger who carried a gun with him at all times and who once shot it out of a car after an altercation with police. Samantha Taylor talked about another incident when she said Pistorius once jumped out of a car with a gun in hand to threaten an unidentified person he thought was following them.

Through tears, she also testified that Pistorius cheated on her twice, the second time with the woman he killed. Murmurs rippled through the courtroom

when Taylor said: “He cheated on me with Reeva Steenkamp.”

Another friend told how Pistorius asked someone else to take the blame when a gun he was handling fired under a table in a busy restaurant.

At the start of the trial, the defense objected to what they call inadmissible evidence that amounts to character “assassination.”

While the first five days of proceedings were dominated by doubts over Pistorius’ character and some of his actions on the night of Steenkamp’s death, the defense has sought to poke holes in the prosecution’s case about the sequence of events: It says it can prove that Steenkamp did not scream before the shots and could not have screamed during them, as witnesses have said.

And forthcoming forensic evidence could back Pistorius’ version of the events.

Prosecutors still have “everything to do” to show beyond a reasonable doubt that Pistorius, whatever his previous actions, intentionally killed his

girlfriend on Feb. 14, 2013, according to former prosecutor du Toit, who has over 20 years’ experience in South Africa’s criminal justice system.

“The ballistic and forensic evidence is going to be crucial in that regard,” he said.

There are questions Pistorius needs to answer, though.

Stipp, the doctor on the scene, said that Pistorius at one point went back upstairs to the area where he shot Steenkamp while she lay dying or dead on the floor downstairs—an unusual reaction. Stipp couldn’t testify to what Pistorius was doing.

And the most recent witness to take the stand, a security guard, added to the suspicions by recounting a call he made to Pistorius after gunshots were reported by neighbors. Pistorius told him everything was “fine,” the guard testified. The athlete then called him back moments later but didn’t speak and cried before the call ended, the guard said.

Pieter Baba said he told a fellow guard: “Everything was not in order as Mr. Pistorius was telling me.”

Sablan tops SGA January Ace



Nick Sablan topped the Saipan Golf Association Ace of the Month Tournament held last Feb. 2 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort west course.

The former national golfer, who has a low four handicap, shot a net score of 71 after firing a 75 gross built around a 36 in the front and a 39 in a back.

Ed Manibusan finished second with his 72 net. The former Superior Court presiding judge had a gross of 77 (39-38) that included three birdies.

Manny Alvarez completed the Top 3 with his 74 net after he carded an 82 gross (40-42), including a birdie. He actually finished tied with Edward C. Sablan but took third place through a scorecard tiebreak.

In the closest to the pin competition, Alvarez took hole No. 3, James Nelson was without peer in hole No. 7, Edward C. Sablan beat everyone in hole No. 13, and Juan "Pan" Guerrero won hole No. 17.

In the longest drives, Steve Balakrishna and Greg Sablan Jr. out-distanced everyone in holes No. 5 and 12, respectively.

A total of 17 SGA took part in the Jan-



Saipan Golf Association members pose for a group photo after holding their January Ace of the Month Tournament last Feb. 2 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort west course.

uary Ace, which had its awards banquet and election of officers the following afternoon at Amigo's Pizza in Garapan.

Veteran golfer Jung Eun Teack was

reelected as president of SGA and joining him in the 2014 roster of officers are vice president Greg Sablan, Jr., treasurer Edward Sablan, secretary Frances Sa-

blan, tournament director Nick Sablan, handicap coordinator Ed Manibusan, and solicitation committee chair Steve Balakrishna. (*Saipan Tribune*)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

All Schools qualifier set; track facility closes



The Oleai Sports Complex track and field facility will be closed starting tomorrow for general repairs and will be reopened only for training and competition of various sports federations.

"This is to inform the general public and other sports federations and clubs using the Oleai sports oval complex that the facility will be closed starting

this Wednesday, March 12, for general repairs. The re-opening of the facility will be announced later but only sports federations will be allowed access to the facility for training and competition purposes. Public usage will be announced at a later date.

"We apologize for the inconvenience, but the facility has deteriorated to the point where liability has become an issue," Northern Marianas Amateur

Sports Association staff Elias Rangamar said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Rangamar, in a separate email to *Saipan Tribune*, said the facility will be the venue for the qualifying tournaments for the 2014 All Schools Championships. The series of qualifiers will start on March 24 and will run for one month in time for the tournament proper, which will be held from May 8 to 19. Qualifying tournaments will be

done by zones and are open in the U8, U10, U12, U14, and U18 age groups. Schools can enter as many students in the qualifiers, but slots in the championships are limited.

Representatives of interested schools are advised to attend a meeting this Friday at 4pm at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

For more information, contact Rangamar at 234-6672. (*Saipan Tribune*)

WHISPERING

From Page 28

The COPPSA middle school trophy added to Whispering Palms' growing trophy collection from various school sports competitions. Earlier this season, the Navy Hill-based school won championship trophies in the middle school girls' volleyball, middle school co-ed volleyball, and the NMIFA Youth U12 Football League (both girls and boys), according to principal Rob Epley.

"As you enter the office at Whispering Palms School on Navy Hill, the first thing you might notice is the large amount of trophies up in the trophy case. You may wonder how a school of only 64 students can win so many trophies," Rob Epley said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Different coaches handled Whispering Palms' teams with Kristy Beling and Sheila Trianni joining Mark Epley on the list and though these three did a great job during the tournaments, Rob Epley said the coaches pointed to no less than

CNMI Sports Hall of Famer Jeff Race as the key to the school's athletic success.

"Out on the field or on the basketball court, you'll find the school's P.E. teacher, coach Jeff. Mark Epley, Kristy Beling, and Sheila Trianni have coached the teams from Whispering Palms at the events this school year, but they'll all tell you that the key to the school's success is the great coaching they get every week from the one-and-only coach Jeff," Rob Epley said.

"Coach Jeff's classes are different

from other P.E. classes at most schools. Jeff doesn't have the students just play different sports, he teaches them how to play the sports. During volleyball, basketball, soccer, or baseball season, Jeff teaches individual skills before the students get to play games. Even during the games coach Jeff will stop the action if there is a teachable moment. Coach Jeff also prepares the students every year for the All Schools swim meet and track meet," the Whispering Palms coach added.

LOPSIDED

From Page 28

retained its perfect record (6-0, pending results of last Saturday's game against IT&E) for second place in the 15-team field behind the defending champions Falcons (6-0).

The Jets remained winless in five games, suffering another big loss after struggling against Comets I's two pitchers. Clarence Camacho started out for Comets I and allowed only one run, while striking out five and walking one in two innings. Sebastian Saures took over in the third inning and also recorded five strikeouts and had a no-hitter.

With Camacho and Saures holding strong on the mound, the Jets made it to scoring position only once. Eldon Rife advanced to third in the second inning off a Comets I error at centerfield with two outs and runner on first, however he was left stranded, as Clarence

Camacho struck out Audrey Camacho.

Clarence Camacho returned to the dugout for Saures, who finished off the Jets with a 1-3 putout play and two quick strikeouts in the third and three straight Ks in the fourth and last inning.

While the Jets failed to nail even a single run in the shortened match, Comets I had no problem with its offense. Runs came early with Comets I racking up 11 in the first inning to set up the blowout. Glenn Taro led the Comets I's well-oiled offense, as he went 3-for-3 at bat, scored three runs and three RBIs. Jesse Taitano was also perfect at the plate, going 4-for-4 and drilling four runs, while Camacho was 3-for-4 and also notched four runs and chipped in two RBIs.

IT&E 18, Twins 1

In the other make-up match last week, IT&E (6-2) nearly blanked the Twins (0-5).

Kyle Kapileo threw a one-hitter to

power IT&E to the easy win. He struck out nine batters before reaching his pitching limit and was relieved by Philip Kapileo, who quickly got the third and final out to wrap up the match after three and a half innings.

Kyle Kapileo also scored three runs off a 2-for-3 performance at the plate and got two RBIs. Philip Kapileo bagged four RBIs, too, duplicating Kyle 2-for-3 clip and making one double and one triple. Philip's double brought two runners home in the first inning IT&E earned five more runs for a 7-0 advantage.

Another seven-run production in the second inning helped IT&E pull away, while Philip added two more RBIs in the third with his triple, while the two other runs came off a wild pitch and a sacrifice out.

Little Legals 7, IP&E Rockies 2

Meanwhile, in the first game last Saturday, the Little Legals (3-3) downed

IP&E Rockies (3-4).

Franklin Ogo hit an RBI double and the Little Legals got two RBIs off a walk and a fielder's choice in the fifth inning to gain cushion against the Rockies.

Before the three-run top of the fifth, the Little Legals were ahead by only two runs, 4-2. Gloyd Martin and Pedro Maratita had a two-run single apiece in the first and second inning to put the Little Legals on top. The Rockies notched one earned run apiece in the second and fourth inning but failed to mount a comeback when they were shut out in the last two innings.

The Little Legals ended the game in style, getting a double play at the bottom of the sixth inning with third batter Keoni Lizama tagged out to second and fifth batter Tyrese Camacho beaten to first. The Rockies were called for the first out earlier with Martin throwing from home plate first for a tag out against second batter Jose Camacho.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	35	26	.574	—
Brooklyn	31	30	.508	4
New York	24	40	.375	12½
Boston	22	41	.349	14
Philadelphia	15	47	.242	20½

Southeast Division

Miami	43	17	.717	—
Washington	33	29	.532	11
Charlotte	29	34	.460	15½
Atlanta	26	35	.426	17½
Orlando	19	45	.297	26

Central Division

x-Indiana	46	17	.730	—
Chicago	35	28	.556	11
Detroit	24	39	.381	22
Cleveland	24	40	.375	22½
Milwaukee	12	50	.194	33½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	46	16	.742	—
Houston	44	19	.698	2½
Dallas	38	26	.594	9
Memphis	36	26	.581	10
New Orleans	26	37	.413	20½

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	46	17	.730	—
Portland	42	21	.667	4
Minnesota	31	31	.500	14½
Denver	27	35	.435	18½
Utah	22	41	.349	24

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	44	20	.688	—
Golden State	40	24	.625	4
Phoenix	36	26	.581	7
Sacramento	22	41	.349	21½
L.A. Lakers	22	42	.344	22

x-clinched playoff spot

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TENNIS

From Page 28

mixed up singles, clinching the championship after downing Peter Loken and Steven Goodwin.

Tan was in the same tournament and bagged the girls U14 singles title. The Saipan International School student was down in the finale against the top-ranked Alina Ishikawa, 1-5, but came back and tied the match, 6-6, before completing the upset, 8-6. Tan also joined the mixed-up doubles, joining forces with Gary Ramsey and advancing to the quarterfinals.

McCullough-Stearns, also of SIS, finished on top of the field in the Marianas Junior Cup held in Guam last month. He partnered with Japanese Kai Kurokawa and prevailed against 20 other pairs in the annual tournament.

The 2012 NMASA Student Athlete of the Year then returned to Saipan to join the Marianas Cup Pro-Am and he paired with veteran Tyce Mister. The Mister-McCullough-Stearns tandem was the highest placed local team (seventh) in the tournament. The pro-am event was McCullough-Stearns' third competition for February, as he started the month with a stint in the For the Love of Volleyball, teaming up with Andrew Johnson.

Athena Andrews also competed in the pro-am and was one of the four lucky Saipan players to have a pro teammate in Japan's Shinako Tanaka. The pair eventually placed fourth in the 16-team field. The Marianas Cup was Andrews' second tournament last month with the For the Love of Volleyball as her first (with Angie Mister).

Andrews and the three other selected athletes are now qualified for the athletes of the year awards, which will be handed out early next year.

Saipan Soccer School Visits Head Start

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Saipan Soccer School staff poses for a photo with students and teachers at Dandan Head Start after the group's visit and clinic late last month.



Saipan Soccer School staff conducts fun drills for Dandan Hear Start students.



Teachers join Saipan Soccer School staff and Kagman Head Start students in the warm-up drills.



Saipan Soccer School staff shows Oleai Head Start students some drills.



Saipan Soccer School's J.J. Takano's demonstrates a drill to Dandan Hear Start students.



Saipan Soccer School staff poses for a photo with Kagman Head Start students and teacher.



Students and teachers of Oleai Head Start pose for a photo with Saipan Soccer School staffs.



Kagman Head Start students follow J.J. Takano's lead.



Kagman Head Start students smile as they enjoy the drills.



Oleai Head Start students line up, waiting for their turn to kick the ball.



Reed on a roll,
wins a World Golf
Championship

PAGE 25

Saipan Tribune Sports

Meeks powers Lakers
past Durant,
Thunder, 114-110

PAGE 24



28 TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Whispering Palms keeps winning run



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Whispering Palms bagged its sixth championship trophy this school year after ruling the middle school division of the 2013-2014 Coalition of Private School Sports Association Girls Basketball League.



Whispering Palms secured the middle school caging crown after beating Mount Carmel School, 16-11, in the finals last Tuesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The champion squad is composed of Guinevere Borja, Amber Montenegro, Darrel Doyle, Sally Lai, Shea Bashman, Chloe Albuen-Kosack, Bernadette Horey, Jin Ju Thompson, Rachel Kwon, and Gilliam Villagomez. Mark Epley coached the Terns.

Villagomez scored 4 points in the title win and was eventually named league MVP, while Kwon was selected to the All-League Team. Lai top-scored for Whispering Palms with her 6 markers, while Montenegro and Borja contributed 4 and 2, respectively.

**See WHISPERING
on Page 26**

Whispering Palms players and coaches Mark Epley and Kristy Beling pose for a photo after winning against Mount Carmel School, 16-1, in the finals of the COPSSA middle school caging last Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lopsided wins for Comets I, IT&E

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Comets I and IT&E remained at the top half of the team standings in the Major division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball League after blowing out separate foes in make-up games last week.

Comets I clobbered the Jets, 23-0, earning the lopsided victory after only three and a half innings. With the win, Comets I

See LOPSIDED on Page 26

IT&E's Philip Kapileo reaches in for the ball, while an IP&E Rockies runner returns to first base during their game in the Major division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield last week.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Beling



Tan



Andrews



McCullough-Stearns

Tennis, volleyball share February honors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Tennis and volleyball players split the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association's top athletes awards for February.

Luke Beling and Tania Tan for Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association were named NMAA Male Athlete of the Month and TSL Foundation Female Student Athlete of the Month, respectively, while Athe-

na Andrews and Clay McCullough-Stearns took the other two monthly plums.

Beling earned NMAA members' nod during the association's monthly meeting last Thursday at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium for his unbeaten record in the 2014 White Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament. The Whispering Palms teacher and Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan instructor defeated four other players to win the men's singles crown in the annual tournament. He then teamed up with Joshua Abragan in ruling the 40-plus field

See TENNIS on Page 26